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Brill's Companion to the Reception of Aristotle in Antiquity

Edited by

Andrea Falcon

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Very early on, I decided that I wanted to provide an accessible and yet highly professional and systematic account of the fortunes of Aristotle's philosophy in antiquity. Given the complexity of the task, I invited twenty-two scholars with different skills and research interests to focus on various aspects of the reception of Aristotle's thought. My second thanks go to these scholars, who have worked on a tight schedule and within narrow constraints with respect to both topic and length.

Finally, special thanks go to Edwin Zoltan (Zoli) Filotas who has translated two chapters from the French (Chapters 1 and 14) and revised the English of most of the non-native English speakers involved in the project. Without his help, I could not have achieved the goal of producing this volume.

The volume aims to offer a comprehensive overview of the reception of Aristotle in antiquity. I am confident that the contributors have achieved that goal, even though I am happy to acknowledge that the volume has not exhausted the topic of the reception of Aristotle in antiquity. I do not see this as a limitation. In my view, the value of any companion, including this one, lies in its capacity not only to collect and synthetize existing scholarship but also to open new avenues of research and to show what remains to be done in a field of study. We have tried to do all these things. The progress of research in the field of the post-Hellenistic reception of Aristotle has been enormous. The same can be said for the reception of Aristotle in late antiquity. In both cases, our primary goal has been to provide up-to-date entries. By contrast, in the case of the Hellenistic reception of Aristotle, we felt it was necessary to approach the extant evidence with a fresh eye. Last but not least, in the case of the reception of Aristotle among Christian authors, it was important to show that there is an entire body of texts that is still largely unexplored.

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Introduction

Andrea Falcon

1 Problems of Periodization

It is beyond dispute that the philosophers of the Hellenistic era rarely mention Aristotle. But the conclusion we should draw from this fact is a matter of considerable debate. F. H. Sandbach famously used the relative paucity of explicit references to Aristotle to challenge the thesis of an Aristotelian influence on Stoic philosophy and, more generally, on Hellenistic philosophy.[1] His conclusion was largely negative: Aristotle's influence on Stoic philosophy was probably not significant, and we should not approach the extant evidence on the assumption that the early Stoics knew and responded to Aristotle. Both the method Sandbach adopted and the thesis he defended have been challenged.[2] The Epicurean tradition is an interesting case study. Certain developments in this tradition are best explained as implicit responses to Aristotle's critique of Democritean atomism. Francesco Verde's contribution to this volume discusses this indirect, or hidden, influence of Aristotle on the Epicurean tradition. In his chapter on Aristotle and the Stoics, Thomas Bénatouïl offers a way to rehabilitate the thesis that Aristotle influenced early Stoicism, even while taking into account several of Sandbach's warnings. By starting with the very few explicit early Stoic references to Aristotle, and connecting them to the implicit similarities with his thought, Bénatouïl argues that the early Stoics had a dialectical relationship with Aristotle in the sense that some of their theoretical commitments are best understood as involving a response to Aristotle.

Everything changed in the first century BC. The return to Aristotle in the form of direct references to his ideas and open discussion of his writings is one of the most conspicuous features of the century. This return marks a new beginning in the ancient reception of Aristotle, which is clearly divided into a Hellenistic and a post-Hellenistic period. I have adopted this division in the organization of the volume. I have further divided the post-Hellenistic reception of Aristotle into two parts. The reason for this additional articulation is the rise after about AD 250 of exegetical work on the Aristotelian corpus by authors who describe themselves as followers of Plato and are convinced that

1 Sandbach 1985.

2 The reader who is interested in a critical discussion of the methodology Sandbach adopted in his book should read Hahm 1991.

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Aristotle's philosophy can be integrated into a philosophical framework that is inspired by a specific reading of Plato. As result of this organization, the essays collected in this volume are arranged under the following three headings:

(I) The Hellenistic Reception of Aristotle
(II) The Post-Hellenistic Return to Aristotle
(III) Aristotle in Late Antiquity

All attempts at periodization are vulnerable to objections, and the one adopted in this volume is no exception to the rule. The very act of dividing something that is both complex and continuous is open to criticism. I would like to review two possible areas of disagreement with the proposed periodization.

First, there are obvious strands of continuity between the Hellenistic and the post-Hellenistic era. For one, Stoic philosophy remained by far the most successful and influential philosophical school in the post-Hellenistic period. The success of Stoicism had an inevitable impact on the philosophical agenda of the other schools. For instance, there is indisputable evidence that the philosophers working within the Peripatetic tradition were consciously responding to Stoic philosophy from the time of Critolaus of Phaselis (second half of the second century BC) to the time of Alexander of Aphrodisias (late second and early third century AD). This continued concern with Stoicism constitutes an important element of continuity within the Peripatetic tradition. It remains true, however, that something changed in the overall attitude toward Aristotle in the first century BC. That something changed becomes clear when we realize that an interest in Aristotle—not only in his doctrines but also in his writings—is documented beyond the narrow boundaries of the Peripatetic tradition. What prompted this surge of interest is still debated. The ancient explanation for this development was the rediscovery and publication of Aristotle's books. The evidence for the circulation and transmission of Aristotle's works from the first to century BC to the second century AD, with a concentration on the putative edition produced by Andronicus of Rhodes, is re-examined by Myrto Hatzimichali. Here suffice it to say that the circulation of Aristotle's books, including those that do not appear to have been known in the Hellenistic period (e.g. the *Categories*), was certainly a factor in the return to Aristotle but does not suffice to explain it. There is an emerging consensus that the surge of interest in Aristotle's philosophy was part of a more general change of attitude toward the past. The rise and gradual affirmation of the idea that there are ancient authorities and Aristotle is one of them is now considered an important factor in the return to his writings.[3]

3 The seminal work in this field of study is Frede 1999.

Let us now turn to the reception of Aristotle in late antiquity. There are at least two possible objections to the periodization adopted in this volume. First, one may argue against the decision to single out late antiquity as a distinct period in the ancient reception of Aristotle by pointing to what the philosophers of late antiquity have in common with those working in the post-Hellenistic period: they all appear to have been critically engaged with Aristotle. In fact, it is even possible to single out the philosophical commentary as a specific form of critical engagement with Aristotle that begins in the post-Hellenistic period and continues in late antiquity (and beyond). Of course, the periodization adopted in this volume does not mean to deny the existence of an ancient commentary tradition on Aristotle. Quite the opposite: the commentary tradition is a strong element of continuity in the ancient reception of Aristotle, especially since commentaries were written one after the other as part of a consolidated exegetical practice that went back to the first century BC. For instance, all the commentators of late antiquity made contact with, and use of, the commentaries written by Alexander of Aphrodisias, whom they regarded as the most authoritative interpreter of Aristotle.[4] This does not mean, however, that the philosophers of late antiquity shared Alexander's philosophical project. Their ultimate goal was the integration of Aristotle's philosophy into a philosophical framework that is inspired by a specific reading of Plato. Alexander could not have accepted this goal. As appointed holder of one of the Imperial chairs of philosophy in Athens (his official title was that of διάδοχος), he developed his own distinctive interpretation of Aristotle through an intense debate with the other members of the Peripatetic tradition as well as exponents of the other philosophical schools.

A second possible objection to the periodization adopted in this volume has to do with the decision to use Porphyry to mark the beginning of late antiquity. Porphyry appears to have been the first Platonist to write commentaries on Aristotle. As Riccardo Chiaradonna explains in his essay on Porphyry and the Aristotelian tradition, Porphyry's choice to write commentaries on Aristotle is best understood as part of a systematic attempt to select and incorporate certain aspects of Aristotle's philosophy into a philosophical framework that goes back to Plato. A direct consequence of this periodization is that Plotinus ends up being the last of the post-Hellenistic philosophers to engage with Aristotle. One may protest that this result obscures the fact that Plotinus was the father of Neoplatonism, which is the philosophical outlook adopted by all the philosophers of late antiquity. My reply is that the goal of the contributors to this volume is not to write a history of Platonism, let alone Neoplatonism. Rather,

4 For a good illustration of how Alexander was used by the commentators of late antiquity, see Luna 2001.

their aim is to provide a historical framework that brings out how ancient attitudes toward Aristotle changed over time. Now, Plotinus regarded himself as an expounder of a philosophical project that went back to Plato. He also had in-depth and first-hand knowledge of not only Aristotle but also the Aristotelian tradition. Yet he did not attempt the integration of Aristotle and Plato into a single position. Finding harmony between Aristotle and Plato was not part of his philosophical project. Plotinus' overall attitude toward Aristotle remains elusive. I refer the reader to the chapter by Sara Magrin for a discussion of Plotinus' critical engagement with Aristotle. Here suffice it to say that, if we agree that the integration of Aristotle and Plato into a single philosophical system is the defining element of the reception of Aristotle in late antiquity, then we should make late antiquity start with Porphyry and not with Plotinus.

2 A Selective Engagement with Aristotle

Evaluating the reception of Aristotle in antiquity is emphatically not an easy task. The task is made more difficult by the existence of two kinds of works written by Aristotle, the so-called school treatises and the more popular works. This distinction is not a modern invention but it is already found in Cicero, who distinguishes between *commentaria* and ἐξωτερικοὶ λόγοι.[5] Among the latter, we should count works that are now lost such as the *Exhortation to Philosophy* [*Protrepticus*], *On Philosophy*, and *On Justice*. Even after the post-Hellenistic return to Aristotle, which was first and foremost a return to his school treatises, these works continued to exercise a considerable influence. I can illustrate this claim with the help of one example. The thesis that the world is eternal, and as such is not subject to generation and destruction, was a non-negotiable doctrine for Aristotle, who argued for it not only in the *Physics* and the treatise *On the Heavens* but also in his lost dialogue *On Philosophy*. The arguments offered in this dialogue enjoyed a considerable success in antiquity. Ps-Ocellus appropriated them for the Pythagorean tradition. Philo of Alexandria used them in his *On the Eternity of the World*. A full discussion of the extant evidence goes beyond the scope of this introduction.[6] What matters here is that these arguments rather than those offered in the *Physics* and the *On the Heavens* had a decisive role in making Aristotle into the ancient champion of eternalism. It is

5 Cicero, *On Goals* 5.12: "*duo genera librorum sunt, unum populariter scriptum quod* ἐξωτερικόν *appellabant, alterum limatius quod in commentariis reliquerunt*."

6 See Effe 1970.

against this background that we should read the remark made by Lucian that if you buy Aristotle, you get "two for the price of one."[7]

When we turn to the reception of Aristotle's school treatises, we can safely say that their fortune was at best mixed in antiquity. While certain aspects of Aristotle's philosophy enjoyed considerable success, others did not attract the interest of the ancient philosophical tradition. Consider the different, almost opposite, fortunes of the bodies of work that are arguably Aristotle's greatest achievements: his logic and his biology. While his logic eventually became the tool or instrument of philosophy, and as such the cornerstone of any serious philosophizing, his biology remained at the margins of the ancient engagement with Aristotle. A notable exception is Galen, who had in-depth knowledge not only of Aristotle's logic and physics but also of his biology. I refer the reader to the chapter in this volume by R. J. Hankinson for a discussion of Galen's reception of Aristotle's thought. Here suffice it to say that Galen was a philosophically minded doctor and his particular interests should be taken into account when we consider his extensive engagement with Aristotle's biology.

Without underplaying the significance of Galen for the history of the reception of Aristotle in antiquity, it remains true that the most common ancient attitude toward Aristotle's biology was indifference. It is telling that even Alexander of Aphrodisias, the commentator of Aristotle *per excellence*, did not critically engage with the zoological writings. Alexander wrote commentaries on the *Physics* (lost), *On the Heavens* (lost), *On Generation and Corruption* (lost), *Meteorology* (extant), *On the Soul* (lost), *On the Senses* (extant), and *On Memory* (lost). There is no evidence that he ever wrote commentaries (or, for that matter, any other exegetical work) on the rest of the so-called *Parva Naturalia*, or on the other writings that belong to the zoological corpus. The situation did not change in late antiquity. Quite the opposite. It was during this period that this selective approach to Aristotle was crystallized into a curriculum of study. What was taught in late antiquity was a selection from Aristotle, which included his logic, some of his physics, and some of his metaphysics. The following works from Aristotle's physics were studied (in this order) as part of the standard philosophical curriculum: *Physics, On the Heavens, On Generation and Corruption*, and *Meteorology*.[8] Of course, this does not mean that Alexander of Aphrodiasias or the philosophers of late antiquity were not familiar with the

7 Lucian, *Philosophies for Sale* 26.

8 The following commentaries on Aristotle writings on natural philosophy are extant: *Physics*: Simplicus and Philoponus (Books 1–4; fragments of Books 5–8); *On the Heavens*: Simplicius; *On Generation and Corruption*: Philoponus (*ex phonês* Ammonius); *Meteorology*: Olympiodorus and Philoponus (Book 1).

corpus of writings devoted to the study of animals. Both Alexander and the philosophers of late antiquity made use of the zoological writings when they deemed it appropriate, either to clarify exegetical points or to defend specific philosophical positions. However, this only makes their selective approach to Aristotle more remarkable.

The selective engagement with Aristotle is a conspicuous aspect of the ancient reception of his thought. It is also an aspect that is worth stressing. In his extant writings, Aristotle insists not only on the philosophical dimension of the study of animals (and, at least in principle, plants), but also on the integrity of his whole project of investigation of the natural world. Evidently, Aristotle was not successful in motivating his successors to make the study of animals (and plants) a non-expendable part of their philosophical agenda. The lack of engagement with this part of Aristotle's philosophy becomes even more conspicuous when we recall that the biological writings circulated outside the philosophical tradition. There is evidence that compendia or summaries of what Aristotle (and Theophrastus) wrote on animals were already in circulation in the Hellenistic period. Consider, for instance, the compendium written by Aristophanes of Byzantium, which is partly preserved in an anthology compiled in the first half of the tenth century.[9] This compendium is important for at least two reasons. First, it is an obvious counter-example to the thesis that Aristotle's writings did not circulate in the Hellenistic period.[10] Second, it combines an interest in some aspects of the explanatory project pursued by Aristotle with a descriptive approach to the main results reached in his zoological writings. Yet it is worth stressing that Aristophanes was an outsider to the philosophical tradition. More directly, he was a scholar (γραμματικός) based in Alexandria, and as such he was working as part of the tradition that goes back to Callimachus and Zenodotus.[11]

3 Ancient Reactions to Aristotle

Without having the ambition to be exhaustive, I would like to review some of the reactions to Aristotle documented in antiquity.

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9 What remains of his summary can be found in Lambros 1885.

10 Sandbach 1985 does not discuss the evidence for the reception of Aristotle's study of animals in the Hellenistic period. His silence is striking because this reception is a challenge to the main thesis defended in the book, namely that Aristotle's writings did not circulate in the Hellenistic era.

11 Cf. *Suda*, s. v. "Aristophanes" (α 3933 Adler).

A notable reaction to his ideas and doctrines was indifference. I have already discussed indifference in connection with Aristotle's study of animals. This part of Aristotle's natural philosophy remained at the margins of the philosophical tradition both in the Hellenistic and in the post-Hellenistic period. The situation did not change in late antiquity. The interest in embryology, which is exemplified in Porphyry's *To Gaurus on How Embryos are Ensouled* [*Ad Gaurum*], is a *prima facie* counter-example to the claim that the philosophers of late antiquity did not have a serious interest in biology. When, however, we look more closely at the extant evidence, we see that the high level of interest that the philosophers of late antiquity had in certain embryological issues was controlled by a specific philosophical (i.e. metaphysical) agenda. This agenda explains why their interest did not translate into a more general interest in Aristotle's biology. With regard to this part of Aristotle's thought, all the philosophers of late antiquity shared the sentiment expressed by Proclus in the following passage from his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*: "Aristotle has extended the teaching [of natural philosophy] beyond what was called for."[12]

Appropriation of Aristotle's ideas and doctrines was another notable reaction. A Stoic interest in Aristotle is documented even before the first century BC. Both Antipater of Tarsus and Panaetius of Rhodes appear to have expressed an interest in Aristotle. Panaetius, who is the best known Stoic philosopher of the second half of the second century BC, is described as an admirer of Aristotle (φιλαριστοτέλης).[13] What exactly his admiration involved is not clear. We are in a marginally better position with respect to Posidonius, the leading Stoic philosopher of the first century BC. Strabo tells us that there was a great deal of search for the causes of the natural phenomena in the style of Aristotle (πολύ . . . τὸ αἰτιολογικὸν . . . καὶ τὸ ἀριστοτελίζον) in Posidonius.[14] This testimony comes from a source that is critical of this development within the Stoic tradition. In other words, Posidonius stretched his search beyond what was considered possible, and indeed appropriate, for a Stoic philosopher. The word ἀριστοτελίζειν is a very interesting one. For Sandbach, it meant conscious emulation of Aristotle. By his lights, however, emulation did not *ipso facto* show that Posidonius had any familiarity with the Aristotelian corpus.[15] I do not see

12 Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* Proemium 7.8–10 Diehl.

13 Philodemus, *History of the Stoa* (*PHerc*. 1018) col. 61 Dorandi.

14 Strabo, *Geography* 2.3.8.

15 For Sandbach (1985: 59–62), Posidonius could have found the Aristotelian interest in the search of the causes either in pseudo-Aristotelian works such as the *Problems*, or in the exoteric works which are now lost but were at the time available, or even in the Peripatetic tradition.

how we can dismiss the report that Posidonius criticized Aristotle for his explanation of the tides, or the testimony that Posidonius followed Aristotle in the explanation of the halo that sometimes surrounds the sun. This evidence suggests that the Stoic appropriation of Aristotle's thought was selective, entailing acceptance of some ideas and rejection of others. What was accepted was placed into a different theoretical context.[16]

The appropriation of ideas and arguments that go back to Aristotle is abundantly documented in the Platonic tradition. Here I am content to draw attention to *The Handbook of Platonism* [*Didaskalikos*] written by Alcinous (second century AD). Although this handbook is officially a presentation of the principal doctrines of Plato, it contains ideas whose Aristotelian provenance is indisputable. Yet those ideas are incorporated into the presentation of Plato's doctrines with no regard for their origin. A striking example of this attitude is the appropriation of Aristotle's syllogistic (categorical syllogistic) and the subsequent Peripatetic developments (hypothetical syllogistic) and their presentation as part of a coherent logical theory which is attributed to Plato. Alcinous never mentions Aristotle and the other Peripatetic philosophers. Rather, he finds the use of the syllogism—and, on the basis of the use, the theory—in Plato's dialogues.[17]

If appropriation of Aristotle's ideas and doctrines was a new and important development, it was not universally accepted. It also prompted the opposite reaction, namely resistance to Aristotle. Atticus (second half of the century AD) is the champion of this reaction in antiquity. His work is extant only in the form of a few excerpts. Eusebius is our source of information, who tells us that Atticus was a Platonist and his ultimate polemical target were those philosophers who used Aristotle to interpret Plato. When we look at the few extant excerpts from this work, we can safely say that Alcinous did not attempt to engage with Aristotle's philosophy. Rather, he rejected it *en bloc*.

Resistance to Aristotle appears to have been a minoritarian position in antiquity. A selective acceptance of his philosophy was by far the most common position in the post-Hellenistic period. This position eventually culminated in the attempt at the integration of Aristotle and Plato into a single philosophical position attempted in late antiquity. This attempt must not be confounded with the tacit appropriation of Aristotelian ideas and doctrines

16 See Kidd 1992. This article shows that Posidonius is following Aristotle, and not Theophrastus, in his meteorological investigations.

17 Cf. Dillon (1977: 49–50): "In the field of logic, the primary 'achievement' of the Middle Platonists was to appropriate Aristotelian logic, together with the developments attributable to Theophrastus and Eudemus, for Plato."

documented in the Stoic and Platonic tradition. For one thing, the integration attempted in late antiquity entailed a vigorous and explicit engagement with Aristotle. For another, it entailed acquaintance not only with Aristotle but also with the tradition of writing commentaries on his works. Porphyry was the initiator of this approach. This does not mean, however, that all the philosophers of late antiquity adopted his approach to Aristotle. Quite the opposite. There is considerable latitude in how the philosophical project of finding harmony between Aristotle and Plato was implemented in late antiquity. I refer the reader to the third and final section of this volume for a discussion of the different ways in which philosophers such as Porphyry, Iamblicus, Syrianus, Proclus, and Simplicius understood this project.

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PART 1

The Hellenistic Reception of Aristotle

CHAPTER 1

Aristotle and the Hellenistic Peripatos: From Theophrastus to Critolaus

David Lefebvre

1 Introduction

If Peripatetic philosophy appears in histories of the Hellenistic period at all, it is in the context of the supposed "decline" of the school.[1] In a sense there is no question that this decline was real, and no appeal to the fragmentary state of our evidence—which could be made for any other philosophical school of the time—can explain it away. It has been noted time and again that the Hellenistic Peripatos focused on narrow historical and empirical research tied to no perceptible overall philosophical project and committed itself to increasingly naturalistic, materialistic, and mechanistic avenues of inquiry. But the concept of decline is nevertheless too simple and normative to do justice to the ways Aristotle was received. It ignores the most distinctive features of Aristotle's philosophy—a universal project, organized and hierarchical yet open-ended and uncertain even about central issues; unsystematic, unlike the two great Hellenistic philosophical systems (Stoicism and Epicureanism); more inclined to research and new hypotheses than to canonical doctrine; and transmitted through a complex corpus split into two parts, exoteric works and school treatises. The Hellenistic Peripatos must therefore be shielded from the sort of retrospective assessment of what is and isn't "Aristotelian" that might otherwise lead us to imagine that after Aristotle nothing remained but a nominal or bastardized form of Aristotelianism.[2]

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* This chapter was translated from the French by Zoli Filotas.

‡ I am grateful to Riccardo Chiaradonna, Didier Pralon, and Marwan Rashed for their suggestions on a first draft of this chapter.

1 Wehrli (1959: 97): "Niedergang." Moraux (1973: 16): "Dekadenz."

2 Sharples 1998: 272–275.

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2 Names, Works, and Periods

Peripatetic is said in many ways. There are, first, the members of the school, that is, the six known scholarchs who succeeded Aristotle in turn: Theophrastus, Strato, Lyco, Aristo, Critolaus, and Diodorus; and the less clearly defined group of contemporaries of Theophrastus (371–287/286 BC) known to belong to the school. Some of these were present at Aristotle's lectures and made up the first generation of Peripatetics: Eudemus of Rhodes (*ca.* 350 BC), Dicaearchus of Messana (*ca.* 376 BC), Aristoxenus of Tarentum (375–315 or 305 BC), Clearchus of Soli (*ca.* 340 BC), Demetrius of Phalerum (350–283 BC), Phanias of Eresus (373 or 365 BC), and Chamaeleon of Heraclea. Others came later, like Praxiphanes of Mitylene and Hieronymus of Rhodes.[3] In light of the expanding meaning of the term "Peripatetic" during this time, we must also add those, like Hermippus of Smyrna, Heraclides Lembus, and Satyrus, who were called Peripatetics because they wrote biographies or practiced literary criticism based on Aristotelian principles, even if their doctrinal affiliation is doubtful.[4]

A full account must also incorporate anonymous Peripatetic testimonies. Several of the falsely attributed short works transmitted in the *corpus aristotelicum* give clear voice to the Aristotelian philosophical project as it survived in the Peripatos. These include, for example, the treatises *On Colors* and *On Things Heard* [*De audibilibus*], the *Mechanical Problems*, and the collection of *Problems*, this last a collective work perhaps dating back to a project initiated by Aristotle himself, assembled using material written within the school over a rather long period. These works have several features in common: they often focus on highly specialized points arising from research programs in natural philosophy and mathematics, they take the form of "problems," and they appeal almost exclusively to material and efficient causes. They are also the fruits of a collective research project stripped of any goal except the causal explanation of phenomena. In this way, they clearly show how the Peripatos distinguished itself from the other schools. Here I can only mention this set of Peripatetic texts, which testify—both from within the *corpus* (*Metaphysics* 11) and from its margins (the *Great Ethics, On Virtues and Vices*)—to the anonymous philosophical labors of the Hellenistic Peripatos, and which complicate the diagnosis of its decline.

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3 A single date indicates the supposed year of birth. I restrict myself to the best known figures. See Dorandi 1999: 35–37. The members of the Peripatos mentioned by Diogenes Laertius in the wills of Theophrastus (5.33) and Lyco (5.70) were not all philosophers (Gottschalk 1972: 331–332). Heraclides of Pontus appears in Wehrli and closes Book 5 of Diogenes Laertius, but his views mark him as a follower of Plato.

4 Lynch 1972: 136–139; Zhmud 2006: 293.

The succession of scholarchs is reported by several sources:[5] Theophrastus of Eresus (322–287/286 BC), Strato of Lampsacus (287/286–269/268 BC), Lyco of Troas (269/268–224 BC), Aristo of Ceos (244–? BC), Critolaus of Phaselis (156/155 BC), and Diodorus of Tyre (who died after 110 BC).[6] This period closes with the gradual rediscovery of Aristotle's written philosophical works initiated by Apellicon of Teos and Andronicus of Rhodes by the end of the first half of the first century BC. Over the course of these 200 years, there was no official *aggiornamento* within the Peripatos as there was in the Academy. Thus there is no such thing as an "old," a "middle," and a "new" Peripatos. Ancient scholars did, however, divide the school's history into periods. Aspasius distinguishes the "old" Peripatetics from those of the time of Andronicus onward (*On Aristotle's Ethics* 44.20–21). This corresponds to a distinction in Strabo (*Geography* 13.1.54) and Plutarch (*Life of Sulla* 26.2), who discuss "old" Peripatetics from Theophrastus up to but excluding Apellicon, contrasting them with those who came later.

In the fifth book of his *On Goals*, Cicero puts into the mouth of the consul Marcus Piso a set of distinctions between Peripatetics based on their supposed departures from Aristotelian ethics as interpreted by Antiochus of Ascalon. This framework—distinguishing between real, degenerate, and merely nominal Peripatetics—has had an enduring effect on perceptions of the school. According to *On Goals* 5.3, the "old" Peripatetics—of whom Aristotle himself is the "prince"—belong to the Academy in its broad sense, since for Cicero the two schools were originally identical. They include Theophrastus and his contemporaries (*On Goals* 4.2). Piso claims to accept only the ethics of Aristotle, his son Nicomachus (showing that he knows that the *Ethics* bearing his name is attributed to Aristotle),[7] and Theophrastus (although he thinks that the latter was wrong to profess that happiness depends on luck). Their successors may be better than other philosophers; nevertheless they have "degenerated," so that their views no longer have anything to do with those of Aristotle and Nicomachus. They do not belong to the same "family" (*On Divination* 2.3); they seem to have "given birth to themselves" (*On Goals* 5.5). The gulf between the scholarchs and the old Aristotelians, he says, is more visible in some cases than in others, and it is not always of the same nature. Strato, for example, dedicates

5 Diogenes Laertius, 1.15 and 5; Cicero, *On Goals* 5.12; Plutarch, *On Exile* 14.605 A–C; Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*], 1.14.63; Hesychius, *Life of Aristotle* [*Vita Menagiana*] 18–21.

6 Except for Critolaus and Diodorus, dates are those of the scholarchate. Critolaus can be dated by his participation in the famous Roman Embassy of 156/155 BC, alongside Diogenes of Babylon (a representative of the Stoics) and Carneades (of the Academy).

7 Chiaradonna 2013: 31–33.

himself to physics, defending new positions and saying little about ethics—in Cicero's eyes a double betrayal of his own school. Hieronymus, for his part, goes wrong by claiming that happiness is to be found in the "absence of pain" (*vacuitatem doloris*); he does not deserve to be called a Peripatetic, and neither does Diodorus, who gives the same account but adds virtue to it (*On Goals* 5.14).

Cicero's conclusions seem at least biased. Of the forty-six works by Strato recorded by Diogenes, twenty-six are broadly speaking on physics, but there are also ten on ethics and politics and eight on logic and dialectic, as well as a treatise *On Being* and another *On the Gods*. So while it is true that Strato is something of a physicist, his catalogue is not unbalanced in a way that Aristotle's own *corpus* is not. Hieronymus and Diodorus are also mistreated. Cicero translates τὸ ἀοχλήτως ζῆν as *vacuitas doloris*, turning the two Peripatetics into hedonists. Rather than departing from Aristotle's doctrine, Hieronymus and Diodorus reflect tensions built into the Aristotelian definition of happiness as a mixture of virtue and external goods—a definition that in fact distinguishes the Aristotelian from the Epicurean and Stoic conceptions of happiness. It is thus Aristotelian ethics itself that gives hedonism its complex status. The adverb ἀοχλήτως seems to be a variation on the adjective ἀνεμπόδιστος, which appears in Aristotle's definition of pleasure (*Nicomachean Ethics* 7.13, 1153a14–15) as an "unimpeded activity of the natural disposition." Diodorus' definition is very close to *Politics* 4.11, 1295a36–37, according to which "the happy life is an unimpeded life in accordance with virtue." Hieronymus' definition goes further, leaving out any reference to virtue. The word ἀοχλήτως probably indicates both the absence of interior disturbance *and* of external obstacles. And indeed Aristotle expresses himself in this way when he wants to prove that happiness is pleasurable (*Nicomachean Ethics* 7.14, 1153b14–25). The reason, he says, everyone believes happiness to consist of a pleasant life is that pleasure is a part of all complete activities, and no activity can be complete if it is impeded. This is why we require bodily goods, external goods, and good luck to be happy; without them our activity would be impeded (which is why it is nonsense to say that the truly virtuous will be happy even when they are being tortured). But goods of fortune and external goods can also interfere with contemplation (*Nicomachean Ethics* 10.8, 1178b4–5). So it turns out that happiness does indeed involve living ἀοχλήτως, without troubles. There is a lesson in Cicero's misunderstanding. As far as possible, one must try to overcome the tendency—exemplified in this text by Cicero—to ossify Aristotelianism. It is better to consider how the Hellenistic Peripatos establishes creative solutions, suited to a new context, to Aristotelian difficulties.

3 Theophrastus of Eresus

Theophrastus is often depicted as Aristotle's first critic within the Peripatetic school. He is known for criticizing the doctrine of motionless substance in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 12.7, in place of which he is claimed to have adopted celestial self-movement and therefore a proto-Stoic conception of the cosmos,[8] for criticizing teleology in his own *Metaphysics*,[9] for criticizing cosmological dualism and replacing the "first body" with heat in his *On Fire*, for a lack of interest in hylomorphism that prefigures the overall indifference of the Hellenistic Peripatos to this approach, and finally for rejecting Aristotle's definition of place. Each of these criticisms has itself been challenged in turn, both on the basis of general features of Theophrastus' work (his aporetic style; the difficulty of dating texts within his exceptionally long philosophical career) and with case-specific arguments. Theophrastus' work in fact testifies more to a desire to explore and apply its Aristotelian theoretical inheritance than to criticize it. Of all Aristotle's successors, Theophrastus is the only one whose work suggests a global research project, potentially comparable to Aristotle's. And Theophrastus was admittedly more than just a successor to Aristotle. Probably present in the Academy (Diogenes Laertius 5.36) and acquainted with some of Plato's dialogues, the views of his successors, and the unwritten Platonic doctrines, Theophrastus collaborated with Aristotle for more than twenty years. His extant works may be divided into three large parts.

The largest of these parts extends Aristotle's program in physics, mostly according to a famous principle well described by Boethius in his commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*: he passes "lightly" over things that he knows Aristotle talked about, and deals "more exactly" with other topics.[10] Theophrastus' important innovations in logic (which are often also attributed to Eudemus) follow this principle.[11] Another example is the diptych formed by his botanical works: the *History of Plants* and the *Causes of Plants*.

8 Van Raalte 1988. The clearest evidence for this view is a passage from Proclus' commentary on the *Timaeus* (2.122.10–17 Diehl), although this is not beyond question (see Bodnár 2002: 189–190; Lefebvre 2015).

9 See von Staden 1997: 194–195; Sharples 1998: 273.

10 Boethius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 12.13–16 Meiser.

11 See Barnes 1985 on the relations between Theophrastus' hypothetical syllogistic and Stoic theory of inference; and Mignucci 1988 concerning Theophrastus' improvements to Aristotle's modal logic.

Theophrastus articulates the study of plants into two explanatory stages and situates them in a theoretical framework inherited from Aristotle.[12] The *Causes of Plants*, which studies the causal processes involved in the generation, illness, and disappearance of plants, has the same role as Aristotle's *Generation of Animals*. Theophrastus' language testifies to his loyalty to Aristotle's natural teleology: "nature does nothing in vain," he says; rather, it acts according to "art" (*Causes of Plants* 1, 1.1.7–8; 2, 1.1.9–10; 4, 4.2.9; 2, 18.2.3). But the parallel titles should not prevent us from noticing a difference in explanatory level between the *Generation of Animals* and the *Causes of Plants*. When Aristotle gives causal explanations in terms of *pneuma* and pairs of opposite qualities, especially heat, he connects them to form and *telos*, to the nutritive soul, and to the difference between act and potency. *Pneuma* is nothing but an "instrument" for the nutritive soul.[13] Theophrastus, by contrast, mentions the nutritive soul just once in the six extant books of the *Causes of Plants*, in a passage where he seems to deny the assimilation of the nutritive soul to a bodily entity like *pneuma* or fire (1, 12.5). The virtual absence of the nutritive soul betrays Theophrastus' uncertainty about how form (the soul) acts on matter (the *pneuma*), an uncertainty that Strato seems to have hoped to resolve by turning to physicalism. This explains Theophrastus' interest in the causal properties of *pneuma* and of material qualities. Several treatises, partway between physics and medicine, extend the Aristotelian project of the *Parva Naturalia* by studying functions common to body and soul not directly treated by Aristotle (*On Dizziness, On Fatigue, On Sweat*). Others build on *Generation of Animals* 5, explaining accidental features in terms of heat (*On <Types of> Hair*). Theophrastus exhibits the same attitude toward Aristotle when he comments on his work. His *Physics* in eight books must have been a synthesis including two books on the soul. His examination of Aristotle's theses on the intellect testifies both to a true commentator's desire to explain and to his concern with extending Aristotle's research. Thus Theophrastus makes contact between the two discussions of the intellect carefully distinguished by Aristotle: that of the *On the Soul* (3.4–5) and of the *Generation of Animals* (2.3), which features the idea that intellect comes "from outside." As he examines the internal consistency of the two treatments in his aporetic manner, he does the work of a true commentator, as Alexander and Themistius would later.

Another block of Theophrastus' work is made up of *Physical Opinions*. Diogenes Laertius (5.48) reports that they belong to a treatise in eighteen books based on the history of physical doctrines. According to Diels, the short

12 Gotthelf 2012.

13 Aristotle, *On the Soul* 3.10, 433b19; *Generation of Animals* 5.8, 789b8–9.

text called *On the Senses* belongs to this sequence. The exact title, status (historical or dialectical), and structure of the *Physical Opinions* have been the focus of intense research ever since Hermann Diels placed it at the beginning of the entire doxographical tradition in his *Doxographi Graeci*. Since Diels and Jaeger, this treatise has been thought to be part of a more general research project of a historical nature, parts of which Aristotle delegated to at least two of his disciples, Theophrastus and Eudemus. The latter himself wrote histories of geometry, mathematics, and astronomy, although this does not rule out the possibility that he and Theophrastus understood the "historical" nature of their research in different ways.[14]

What is known as Theophrastus' *Metaphysics* (the third major part of his extant *corpus*) is particularly important, for it is the only extant text from the Peripatos suggesting how Aristotle's *Metaphysics* might have been received within his own school. Indeed, it has been interpreted as an introduction to the earlier treatise. A famous scholium at the end of the work says that it contains some *aporiai* preliminary to the whole study <of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*> (12b4–5). However difficult it may be to interpret, the text as a whole is less aporetic than is often thought. To be sure, it has a typically Theophrastian inclination to reflect in an aporetic mode on the principles of physics (including final causes) and astronomy, as well as on their explanatory limits. But the main difficulty in understanding the goal of the text is its unclear place on the playing field of Aristotelian sciences. Nowhere does Theophrastus say how his work is related to any science, although elsewhere he uses the term "first philosophy" and distinguishes it from "the study of nature."[15] Thus it is somewhat misleading to give this work the title *Metaphysics*.[16] When we compare it to the Aristotelian *Metaphysics* known to us, we find that it is quite close to the theological preoccupations of Book 12, but more or less unrelated to the central books on substance.[17] Theophrastus' ambitious project is a "study of the whole" (including sensible and intelligible beings), as he says at the very end of the treatise:

> [...] the main [point] that has been made [is that] one should try to apprehend some boundary, both in nature and in the substance of the whole, and both for "that for the sake of which" and for the impulse

14 See Mansfeld 2010. On this project, cf. Jaeger 1948: 334–336.

15 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 26.5–15.

16 The title of the *Metaphysics* comes from the scholium (12a4–b5). Gutas 2010 accepts the alternative title *On First Principles*.

17 Sharples 2009: 160 and 2015.

> toward "the better." For *this* is the starting point of the study of the whole, among what [things] beings are and how they relate to one another. (αὕτη γὰρ ἀρχὴ τῆς τοῦ σύμπαντος θεωρίας, ἐν τίσιν τὰ ὄντα καὶ πῶς ἔχει πρὸς ἄλληλα, 11b24–12a2. Trans. Gutas revised).

Here Theophrastus describes a (nameless) *theôria* bearing on nature and on intelligible principles, one that escapes the distinction between the *theôria* about "first beings" and the *theôria* "of nature" that opens the work (4a2–3). This program, straddling two fields of knowledge, is actually that of the study Theophrastus carries out throughout the treatise. It concerns itself with two broad questions. The first, "among what [things] beings are" becomes clearer in light of the second, "how they relate to one another." At first, Theophrastus asks if there is "some connection (συναφή) and something like a mutual association between intelligibles and the [things] of nature or [there is] none, but the two are, as it were, separated, though somehow both contributing to [bring about] all of existence (εἰς τὴν πᾶσαν οὐσίαν)" (4a9–13). Final causation, he suggests, is a kind of connection between two kinds of being, intelligible and natural. The "study of the whole" raises two questions that are fundamental for the agenda of the Academy and the Peripatos. The first is ontological: what are the kinds of being and to which kinds do the different beings belong? The text shows that Theophrastus uses Aristotelian classifications: sensibles, numbers (which are not principles), and intelligibles. The second question is characteristic of Aristotelian philosophy and even its Theophrastian extension: if the whole (composed of sensible nature and intelligible principles) is not made up of an endless series of unconnected levels, in the manner of Speusippean episodism, to what extent does its order rest on final causes?[18] And to what extent does the better exist in the whole? Theophrastus does not deny the existence of teleology in the whole. But, more than Aristotle, he aims to indicate its limits and so to come back to the guiding question of the unity of the whole and the role of the principles.[19] It is not impossible, then, that this so-called *Metaphysics*, whose program was never brought to completion by Theophrastus, provides evidence of an ancient period of collective elaboration of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.[20] If so, it does not belong to the history of the Hellenistic reception of Aristotle's masterpiece, but rather to its prehistory, and Aristotle's first philosophy is totally absent from the Hellenistic Peripatos' philosophical agenda. Through this farewell address to metaphysical studies,

18 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 12.10, 1076a1 and 14.3, 1090b19.

19 Sharples 1998: 273.

20 Gutas 2010: 9, 249–250.

Theophrastus perfectly epitomizes the main trends within the Hellenistic Peripatos. Strato develops his research on the causality of *pneuma* and opposite qualities, Lyco and Aristo borrow his taste for beautiful writing (a distinctive trait of the school) and no doubt also his art of *Characters*, which draws at once from comedy, rhetoric, and the ethically motivated description of individual vices.[21]

4 Strato of Lampsacus

Strato, "the physicist,"[22] marks a break in the Peripatetic school. Without thereby limiting his philosophical ambitions, he focused on physics, leaving biology behind.[23] He was the last member of the Hellenistic Peripatos to take any interest in natural philosophy until Critolaus, who pursued it in a more historical and doctrinal vein.[24] The subsequent lack of interest in physics was itself a transformation of the identity of the Lyceum. It was made possible by the fact that, unlike its Epicurean and Stoic counterparts, Aristotelian physics developed independently of other inquiries—particularly ethics—because of epistemological strictures about the separation of the sciences and the independence of their principles.[25] Factors contributing to the abandonment of physics in the Athenian Peripatos may have included the growing specialization of the sciences, the emancipation of many fields from philosophy, and the rise of Alexandria as an intellectual capital. This last development was partly propelled by the political and economic power of Ptolemy Soter and his son Ptolemy Philadelphus, but it was also due to the intellectual influence of a Peripatetic, Demetrius of Phalerum.[26] Although the Peripatos may have suffered because of the displacement, the school itself played a crucial role in the intellectual development of Alexandria. Ptolemy Soter summoned Strato to Alexandria to complete the education of his son (Diogenes Laertius 5.58). This allowed him to witness new developments in Alexandrian mathematics, optics, mechanics, and medicine. Some of these, like the contributions of

21 Menander is said to have been Theophrastus' student (Diogenes Laertius 5.36).

22 Diogenes Laertius 5.58.

23 Diogenes Laertius 5.59–60, however, attributes to him a work *On Procreation*. His two treatises *On Problematic Animals* and *On Mythological Animals* may correspond to a growing interest in the zoology of the so-called *mirabilia*.

24 See Sharples 2006.

25 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 1.7; *Metaphysics* 6.1, 1025b18–1026a6.

26 Diogenes Laertius 5.39, 78.

Erasistratus the doctor, were animated by principles and practices taken from Aristotle.[27]

As far as we can tell, Strato did not comment on earlier texts, except for a discussion of a passage from Aristotle's *Topics* (known through Alexander of Aphrodisias' commentary)[28] and a series of objections to the *Phaedo*'s arguments for the immortality of the soul (preserved by Damascius in his own commentary). Like Theophrastus, he pursued a research program in physics; but, very differently, he reworked Aristotelian physics and cosmology in depth—which is not to say that it is easy to determine the extent of his reforms. He did not adopt the definition of time as the "number of movement." This highlights Strato's interest in the continuity of time, but it does not necessarily indicate any disagreement with Aristotle. He defined place as a three-dimensional interval, always filled by a body.[29] He postulated micro-voids within bodies, in particular to explain the phenomenon of compression.[30] He claimed that fire has a weight and thus that the four elements move centripetally, using the phenomenon of expulsion (ἔκθλιψις) to explain their orderly layering (earth-water-air-fire).[31] He suppressed the fifth element and described the heavens as fiery.[32] He probably rejected the existence of the first mover. He took the qualities *hot* and *cold* as fundamental principles, and assigned crucial importance to *pneuma*. As far as we can tell, he denied neither the eternity of the world, nor finitism, nor geocentrism, and he did not take up the idea of atoms or an infinite void beyond the cosmos.

Some have seen Strato as a Peripatetic renegade, influenced by the atomism of Democritus or even of Epicurus. Once again, it is important not to confine Aristotle within an overly narrow interpretation—after all, he clearly wavered on the existence of the fifth element,[33] and his natural teleology accepts and even requires an appeal to necessity.[34] It is thus better to understand Strato's physics, which is particularly attentive to the resources provided by experience, as a thoughtful development of mechanistic possibilities latent in Aristotle. Strato's approach allows him to resolve some of the ambiguities endemic to

27 Von Staden 1997: 185.

28 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Topics* 340.3–17.

29 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 601.16–25.

30 Furley 1989.

31 Lefebvre 2011.

32 Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.23, 200.21–22.

33 See, for example, *On Philosophy* 21 Ross.

34 Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* 5.1, 778a16–778b19; *Meteorology* 4 (whose authenticity has for this reason been questioned).

Aristotle's account of the causal functioning of form and the relationship between it and its instrument, *pneuma*. The mechanism of expulsion, for example, acts as an efficient cause for the centrifugal motion of fire. This yields a simpler, more coherent, de-Platonized physics, but one in which the roles of formal and final causes are obscure. We might well wonder how Strato avoided the materialism with which his Aristotelianism was ultimately assimilated.

Strato is concerned to warn his readers against literal interpretations of certain teleological—and apparently anthropomorphic—formulas in Aristotle and Theophrastus that seem to have been inherited from the artificialist cosmogony of the *Timaeus*. Against a literal reading of that text, he argues that god is not a cause.[35] Also against Plato, he argues that the cosmos is not an animal.[36] "All divine power," he writes, "is within nature," but the latter is not a conscious, demiurgic force that shapes matter intentionally.[37] A fragment from Plutarch's *Against Colotes* nevertheless suggests that we might find in Strato's physics a more radical challenge to the priority of the final cause, turning *tuchê* into an *archê*: "that which is according to nature follows that which is according to chance" (1115 B).

Strato's critique of Aristotle's theory of generation helps to shed light on his position on formal causes. According to a passage from Galen's *On Semen* (IV 629 K = 2.5.12–15 De Lacy), Strato reinstated a double-seed theory and used predominance to explain the sex of the newborn. In fact, Aristotle too uses an account of predominance of the movement of male semen over the matter of the menses. For him, the problem is to understand how the sex or physical traits of an animal can originate in the female, granted that menses are matter. Several contemporary commentators therefore attribute a kind of quasi-formal motion to the menstrual residue in Aristotle's account. But if that is right, why not say that women too have a kind of seed, since menstrual fluid is for Aristotle a cooler and less pure kind of sperm?[38] According to Ps-Plutarch, Strato disagreed with Aristotle about the nature of sperm. He writes that Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle say that the male's semen is bodily but that its power not, while for Strato and Democritus, this power is a body, because it is "pneumatic."[39] But Strato's disagreement with Aristotle is partly a matter of emphasis. Indeed, for Aristotle the male contribution to generation

35 Cicero, *Posterior Academics* 121.

36 Plutarch, *Against Colotes* 1114 F–1115 B.

37 Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.35; Lactantius, *On the Wrath of God* 10.1. See Repici 1988: 117–156.

38 Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* 4.1, 765b35–766a1.

39 Ps-Plutarch, *Opinions of the Philosophers* 5.4.3 (905 B).

isn't material; the body of semen evaporates after acting on the menses, but its power (heat or *pneuma*) is effectively bodily. All told, Strato's two corrections suggest that he hoped to free Aristotelian embryology from the structural difficulty associated with hylomorphic dualism. Strato attributes formal movement to the menses, and tends to identify the form transmitted by the male with its material instrument (*pneuma*), which makes etiological sense of the causal efficiency Aristotle attributes to form.[40]

Strato's revision of the relationship between soul and *pneuma* may be enough to make him more than a simple reformer. The extant fragments never make it clear whether and how he connected physics to the rest of philosophy, granted that for Aristotle "nature is only one particular genus of being."[41] A treatise *On Being* is attributed to Strato by Proclus; it suggests that we should not reduce his research to physics, but what we know from this work does not help answer our question. Strato apparently says that "being is that which remains" (τὸ μένον εἶναι τὸ ὂν)[42] and that being is the "cause of permanence."[43] Proclus and Damascius both see in this doctrine ignorance or forgetfulness of the fact that being is said in many ways, although neither seems to know anything more than this single claim.[44]

5 Lyco of Troas

In his will, Strato does not hide the difficulties raised by his succession. He bequeaths the school to Lyco only "because the others are too old or busy with other things."[45] In Wilamowitz's view, it is he who initiates the "two-hundred-year death sleep [*Totenschlaf*] of Aristotelian philosophy."[46] At worst, this description might be appropriate for the scholarchates of Lyco and Aristo. But in fact a lack of evidence makes it very difficult to assess the intellectual life of the Lyceum during this period. Diogenes documents Lyco's reference

40 Strato's view on the power of seed should be traced back to his position on the soul; the analogy used in Tertullian's *On the Soul* (14.3–5) is often interpreted as involving an identification of soul and *pneuma*. See Annas 1992: 28–30 and Sharples 2009: 163–164.

41 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 4.3, 1005a34 (trans. Ross).

42 Damascius, *On the Principles* 2.76.7 Westerink.

43 Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 3.15.5–11 and 15.31–16.9 Diehl.

44 Strato has been credited with a definition of the good that, exceptionally, appeals to the difference between act and potency: "τὸ τελειοῦν τὴν δύναμιν, δι'ἣν τῆς ἐνεργείας τυγχάνομεν" (Stobaeus, *Selections* 2.7, 53.22–54.9).

45 Diogenes Laertius 5.65.

46 Wilamowitz 1881: 83.

to "published and unpublished" books in his will (5.73) but does not record a catalogue of Lyco's works, a peculiarity that might originate in his sources.[47] Diogenes (5.65) represents Lyco as an educator, from which Gottschalk infers that Lyco ensured the survival of the Peripatos as a school more than as a research institution, by giving a "liberal education" "between the rigid dogmas" of the Garden and the Stoa.[48] This new pedagogical orientation might suggest that the Lyceum's practical tendencies flowered during Lyco's scholarchate even as the school provisionally retreated from the theoretical life.[49] Cicero characterizes Lyco harshly: "he had an opulent style but rather threadbare content."[50] Diogenes describes him as an eloquent man (5.65.1–2: φραστικὸς ἀνήρ). He is credited with views on ethics, on consolation,[51] and on the *telos*, which he defines as the "true joy of the soul" (τὴν ἀληθὴν χαρὰν τῆς ψυχῆς).[52] A portrait by Lyco of a drunkard may have originated either in a work entitled *On Drunkenness*, a genre to which Theophrastus had already contributed,[53] in the *Characters*, or in one of Lyco's rhetorical exercises (though these last two may amount to the same thing).[54] His definition of the end is based on a term (χαρά, joy) common to Peripatetic, Stoic, and Epicurean jargon alike. It suggests that Lyco may have taken a polemical position.[55] Since joy was pleasure in movement for Epicurus and a "good affection" (εὐπάθεια) for the Stoics,[56] identifying the ultimate goal as "true joy" amounts to taking a stand against both positions in much the same manner as Hieronymus and Diodorus, while avoiding falling into hedonism thanks to the qualification added by the word "true."

6 Aristo of Ceos

The reconstruction of Aristo's catalogue is greatly complicated by the existence of several Aristos, and by the fact that the Peripatetic Aristo of Ceos and

47 Moraux 1951: 247.

48 Gottschalk 1972: 321.

49 Sharples 1998: 275. On the debate between Theophrastus and Dicaearchus on the best life, (practical or theoretical) see Cicero, *To Atticus* 2.16.3.

50 Cicero, *On Goals* 5.13 (trans. Woolf).

51 Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 3.77–78.

52 Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 2.21.129.9. Inwood 2014: 39.

53 Diogenes Laertius 5.44.

54 Rutilius Lupus, *On Figures of Speech* 2.7.

55 White 2004: 392–393.

56 Diogenes Laertius 10.136 and 7.16.

the Stoic Aristo of Chios have rival claims to the authorship of several titles.[57] To Lyco's successor we may attribute at least some *Talks on Love* (Ἐρωτικαὶ διατριβαί) or *Erotic Examples* (Ἐρωτικὰ Ὅμοια), a *Lyco*, and some biographies of philosophers, notably including Peripatetics like Strato (Diogenes Laertius 5.64). There is also a text *On Relieving Arrogance* (Περὶ τοῦ κουφίζειν ὑπερηφανίας) by an Aristo discussed at some length by Philodemus in his book *On Vices*, which might belong to the same genre as the *Characters*. Whether its title is *Talks on Love* or *Erotic Examples*, that treatise is linked to a prominent Peripatetic research tradition on erotic questions (ethical, rhetorical, and physical), running from Aristotle (Diogenes Laertius 5.24; fr. 24–25 Ross), through Theophrastus (Diogenes Laertius 5.43), Demetrius of Phalerus (Diogenes Laertius 5.81), Clearchus of Soli (Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner* 6, 255 B), Hieronymus of Rhodes (Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner* 13, 602 A–D), and finally to *Problem* 4.[58]

7 Critolaus of Phaselis

We have the titles of no works by Critolaus of Phaselis.[59] He nevertheless represents the first traces of a gradual return to the philosophical study of Aristotle's school treatises, and his interest in physics distinguishes him from his two predecessors (though the fact that he must have learned about Aristotelian philosophy somewhere suggests some doctrinal continuity within the school). Critolaus is known for his desire to "imitate the old" Aristotelians (those from before Strato).[60] His views are distinct, however, both because they are more openly opposed to Stoicism than those of his predecessors[61] and because they are not always aligned with Aristotle. In his physics, Critolaus follows Theophrastus in offering (against the Stoics) two new arguments for the eternity of the world.[62] He is credited with a definition of time as thought (νόημα) or measure (μέτρον) rather than reality (ὑπόστασις).[63] He maintains cosmological dualism, introducing providence to the heavens but not the sublunary sphere.[64]

57 Diogenes Laertius 7.163.

58 Fortenbaugh 2011: 212–222.

59 See Hahm 2007 for an explanation of the lack of any title of a work by Critolaus.

60 Cicero, *On Goals* 5.14. See Hahm 2007: 78n53.

61 Diogenes Laertius 5.44.

62 Philo, *On the Eternity of the World* 90 and 94.

63 Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.8, 103.8–9.

64 Sharples 2002: 14.

He states that the god is "the intellect originating in the impassible ether".[65] Perhaps following Strato's physicalism, Critolaus holds that the soul is made up of the fifth element,[66] but according to Epiphanius, he treats the soul as the "ἐνδελέχεια" of the body.[67] If we correct this, taking it as ἐντελέχεια, it becomes evidence of a remarkable return to the hylomorphism of the school treatises. But Cicero uses the same spelling in a passage of the *Tusculan Disputations* (1.22) in which he refers to Aristotle's lost dialogue *On Philosophy* and talks about the "new word" ἐνδελέχεια. He says that, according to Aristotle, the soul is composed of the fifth element and is a "constant and perpetual motion." So ἐνδελέχεια in Critolaus is better understood as a reference to Aristotle's *On Philosophy* rather than as an (unexpected) allusion to *On the Soul*.[68] In ethics, against the Stoics, Critolaus is claimed to have defined the *telos* as the "perfection of a life unfolding well according to nature," "filled by the three kinds of good at once"—namely goods of the soul, goods of the body, and external goods.[69] Finally, Critolaus follows the *Gorgias* more than Aristotle in denying that rhetoric is an art.[70] Diodorus of Tyre, his successor, may have been the last scholarch. Sulla took Athens in 86 BC, and after that date it is doubtful that the Peripatetic scholarchate in Athens could have survived.[71]

8 From One Aristotle to Another

Let us return to the explanation by Strabo (*Geography* 13.1.54) and Plutarch (*Life of Sulla* 26) of the decline of the Lyceum after Theophrastus. According to Strabo, the "old Peripatetics" could not "truly devote themselves to philosophy" because they had few books, most of them exoteric, and thus they were reduced to "declaiming commonplaces" (θέσεις ληκυθίζειν).[72] Those who came later, once the other books were rediscovered, "did better philosophy and were better Aristotelians" (ἄμεινον μὲν ἐκείνων φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ ἀριστοτελίζειν),

65 Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.1, 35.5–6.

66 Macrobius, *On the Dream of Scipio*, 1.14.20.

67 Epiphanius, *Against All Heresies* 3.31.

68 Theophrastus is said to have used the same word in Iamblichus' *On the Soul* (Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.49, 367.2).

69 Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 2.21.129.10; Stobaeus, *Selections* 2.7, 46.5–15. Hahm (2007: 64–65) shows how Critolaus combined Stoic vocabulary with Aristotelian conditions for happiness.

70 Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 2.15.23.

71 See Gottschalk 1987: 1093–1094; Barnes 1997: 21–25; Hahm 2007: 96–97.

72 The translation is disputed. I adopt that of the Liddell-Scott-Jones Lexicon.

although they still had to content themselves with conjectures because of numerous errors in the books. For Plutarch, the "old Peripatetics" were "accomplished and learned men," but they did not have access to many copies of the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus, and those they had were of poor quality. For our purposes, the point is not whether this story is plausible, nor whether it is compatible with other reports about the fortunes of Aristotle's writings, nor again the nature of the work done by the "editors,"[73] but rather what the story can teach us about the evolution of the Lyceum.

Two kinds of objection have been made to this explanation. (i) There is evidence that some esoteric works were known during this period and that they circulated through channels outside of the Peripatos. These include the *Physics* (a passage from which is the subject of editorial debate between Eudemus, in Rhodes, and Theophrastus, in Athens),[74] the treatise *On Generation and Corruption*, and parts of the zoological corpus.[75] In addition, Strato knew of the *Topics*. The case of Critolaus likewise suggests early access to certain theses from the school works. (ii) The explanation rests on a premise taken from first-century Roman philosophy: that philosophy consists in exegesis.[76] Thus, it betrays an anachronistic conception of philosophy. As Sharples puts it: "Where the earlier Peripatetics had sought to continue Aristotle's work, later writers are essentially looking back to it and commenting upon it."[77] Actually, contrary to (ii), the first Peripatetics never ruled out appealing to Aristotle's texts in order to continue his work. Innovation and commentary are not incompatible. As we have seen, Theophrastus did philosophy both by commenting on Aristotle's texts and by pursuing his own investigations in natural philosophy, especially botany. So if the old Peripatetics did not have access to all of Aristotle's works, it may be that this hindered their work, as it would also have done in the case of Theophrastus. Objection (i) may seem to weaken the explanation, but it allows us to understand its relevance. The fact that copies of Aristotle's school treatises were in circulation during this period shows that their rarity was not the only factor in the evolution of the Hellenistic Peripatos, and that the nature of the philosophical interests prevailing among members of the school also played a part.[78]

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73 On these issues, I refer the reader chapter 4 of this volume.

74 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 923.7–16.

75 Barnes 1997: 12–16; Frede 1999: 774–775; Primavesi 2007.

76 Hatzimichali 2013: 3.

77 Sharples 1999: 152.

78 Frede 1999: 775.

This should not come as a surprise. From the beginning, the early Peripatos propelled Aristotelianism toward particular kinds of inquiry, mainly governed by exoteric works and a materialist reading of hylomorphism. Paradoxically enough, the catalogues of their work and the nature of their research give the impression both that they knew very little of the Aristotelian school treatises and that where they took an interest in Aristotle's most distinctive theses, it was mainly to criticize them. The titles of their books testify to interests in politics and constitutional theory (Dicaearchus), cultural history (Dicaearchus), geography (Dicaearchus), the collection of proverbs (Dicaearchus, Clearchus), philology (Dicaearchus, Chamaeleon), grammar (Praxiphanes), biography (Aristoxenus, Dicaearchus), and ethical issues like education, friendship, erotic questions (Clearchus, Chamaeleon, Praxiphanes). Neoplatonic commentators refer to an early Peripatetic *Categories*, a treatise *On Interpretation*, and *Analytics* by Phanias of Eresus, Theophrastus, and Eudemus,[79] though the attribution of the *Categories* is not accepted.[80] The *Physics* was only of minor interest to the Peripatetics, Eudemus and Theophrastus being the chief exceptions. Except for Eudemus and Theophrastus, logic did not become an object of study. With the notable exception of Theophrastus, theological and ontological issues never were central concerns in the school, and this was the case even when, if Strabo and Plutarch are to be believed, the Aristotle's library was still within the walls of the Peripatos. Early Peripatetics mainly concerned themselves with history, biography, and the collection of sources for variable purposes in philology, ethics, and politics—though not in first philosophy, logic, or zoology. Here we can make out the themes of the exoteric works (the "lost" Aristotle, in Bignone's words), and the tastes of Aristotle the encyclopedist, compiler of competition winners and constitutions, and collector of proverbs (Diogenes Laertius 5.26–27). Two dialogues, the *Eudemus* and *On Philosophy*, seem to have been particularly important both within the school and beyond.[81]

The early Peripatos also showed a significant interest in psychological topics.[82] The Hellenistic Lyceum's recurring focus on sleep, dreams, education, medicine, and character (both animal and human) demonstrates concern for the unity of body and soul (the *Physiognomics* is a good example). But the intention was obviously not to conduct a detailed theoretical examination of

79 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 7.19–22.

80 Gottschalk 1987: 1102–1103.

81 See Bignone 1936 and Sedley 1991.

82 A Περὶ ψυχῆς is attributed to Dicaearchus; a treatise *On Sleep* to Clearchus of Soli. See Dorandi 2006.

hylomorphism and the relationship between matter and form.[83] Aristoxenus, known as musical theorist, and Dicaearchus defended different conceptions of the soul as *harmonia*—of parts of the body and of the four material primary qualities respectively.[84] It is difficult to know the right context for this discussion. In Plato's *Phaedo*, the Pythagorean Simmias maintains the *harmonia* theory (85 E–86 D), and Socrates refutes it (91 C–94 E). In the *Eudemus* as in *On the Soul* (1.4, 407b–408a), Aristotle argues against this theory.[85] Dicaearchus could have elaborated an improved version of the theory against Plato. What seems clear is that in the harmony theory, soul figures as a quality or an accident of the body conceived as the genuine substance. Soul is neither body's *entelecheia* nor its form, and form itself may become a mere quality. Certainly, such a view shares with Aristotle the idea that soul is not a separate substance that could get into different bodies. It could thus be an interpretation of the Aristotelian unity of body and soul. But an accident cannot act as an efficient cause on the body in the same way that a form can. The question is therefore whether this conception of the soul was meant as a critical answer to Aristotle's definition of the soul as form or as a possible interpretation of difficult aspects of Aristotle's physics.[86] This brings us back to a dilemma we saw earlier. Either way, Aristotelian psychology and hylomorphism took a historical turn toward materialism. This would later have a direct influence on Andronicus of Rhodes and the Aristotelian ontology of the first century BC.[87] Theophrastus' and Strato's emphasis on the role of *pneuma* leads by another path to the same reconsideration of the status of Aristotelian form.

If the eclipse of the libraries of Aristotle and Theophrastus played a role in the development of the Hellenistic Peripatos, it was thus much less determinate than the very early philosophical orientation of the Peripatetics toward *a certain Aristotle*. Which of Aristotle's first generation of students (except maybe Theophrastus and Eudemus) read the *Metaphysics* and *On the Soul*, even in part? The history of the Hellenistic Peripatos should be

83 Sharples 2009 and 2015.

84 On Dicaearchus, see Nemesius, *On the Nature of Man* 17.5–10; on Aristoxenus: Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 1.41. See Sharples 2001 and Caston 2001.

85 Aristotle, *On Philosophy*, Fr. 7 Ross.

86 For the first, see Caston 2001: 176 (Dicaearchus held epiphenomenalism against Aristotle); for the second, Rashed 2004: 39 and 2007: 19 on the connection between Theophrastus' conception of a weak *eidos* and the materialism of the early Peripatos.

87 Rashed 2007: 18–30; for more on the Aristotelian ontology in the first century BC, see chapter 5 in this volume.

understood less as a "decline" than as the aftermath of the earliest reception of Aristotle in the Peripatos itself by Theophrastus' contemporaries. Thus the phenomenon that slowly began to unfold in the first century BC was not a "renaissance" of authentic Aristotelianism, as if this had once existed and then been lost, but rather the end of an incubation period. This transition was brought about by the slow discovery of the Aristotelian school treatises, a discovery which was later recast as a criticism of Aristotle's earliest reception in his own school.

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CHAPTER 2

Aristotle and the Garden

Francesco Verde

1 Introduction

The presence of Aristotle in Epicurus' Garden (and, more generally, in Hellenistic philosophy) is a complex and controversial topic. To begin, we need to distinguish between (1) a direct or explicit form of Aristotelian influence and (2) an indirect or hidden one. When I say that Aristotle is directly present in the writings of Epicurus and the Epicureans, I mean that they refer to him explicitly; by indirect influence, I am pointing to the presence of Aristotle in all those Epicurean texts that appear to imply—or make a tacit reference to—his philosophy.[1]

If we limit the investigation to direct influence alone, Epicurus' reception of Aristotle amounts to almost nothing. The texts by Epicurus where Aristotle's name appears are very few and, in addition, they are not easy to interpret. On the other hand, several Epicurean doctrines are better explained in light of Aristotle, with whom Epicurus often seems to have a (simultaneously) polemical and dialectical relationship.

This chapter will focus on the dual (direct and indirect) presence of Aristotle in Epicurus, while also providing an overview of the reception of Peripatetic philosophy by some leading Epicureans (Metrodorus, Polyaenus, Hermarchus, Philodemus, and Lucretius). Given that this is a rather extensive topic, and one difficult to investigate in detail because of the scarcity of sources, this chapter—not least for the sake of brevity—will not aim to provide an exhaustive account or to explore all the details of this question (for that, a new monograph would no doubt be required, in addition to that already written by Marcello Gigante).[2] Rather, it will give a preliminary overview of Aristotle's reception in the Garden.

* I would like to thank Tiziano Dorandi, Andrea Falcon, and Emidio Spinelli for their helpful comments. My thanks to Zoli Filotas too for improving my English.

1 On this point, see the cautious remarks in Nielsen 2012: 5–9.

2 Gigante 1999.

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2 The Direct Presence of Aristotle in Epicurus

In his *Philosophies for Sale* (26), Lucian sarcastically describes Zeus and Hermes holding an auction of the most important philosophers of antiquity. Hermes tries to convince his listeners to buy the philosophers by describing the merits of his merchandise. When it is time to sell Aristotle, the price suggested by Hermes is twenty mines: a hefty sum that is justified not only because Aristotle really knows everything, but because he is "double" (διπλοῦς), since there are actually two Aristotles—the exoteric and the esoteric. Lucian was writing in the second century AD and, despite his irony, he confirms that the issue of the two Aristotles was perfectly alive. Any treatment of the reception of Aristotle in the Garden must grapple with precisely this problem of a "double" Aristotle. The main question, then, is this: did Epicurus come into contact with Aristotle's published works, his unpublished works, or both? To answer this question—which is obviously important—one cannot ignore an impressive book by Ettore Bignone, *L'Aristotele perduto e la formazione filosofica di Epicuro*, first published in 1936 and later reprinted with updates and additions in 1973 and 2007. Bignone's famous thesis is contained in his title: Epicurus, he argues, acquired his philosophical background through the study of Aristotle's lost works (his dialogues, particularly influenced by the philosophy of Plato), which he addressed in a lively and passionate series of polemics. In order to support this thesis, Bignone takes up Jaeger's hypothesis on the evolution and development of the Stagirite's doctrine.[3] He assumes that Aristotle's philosophical career included a Platonizing phase and that Epicurus heatedly engaged with it, to the point of modifying Aristotle's doctrines and adapting them to his own. This suggests that Epicurus never read the unpublished treatises by Aristotle. Bignone's view significantly influenced Epicurean studies. Thanks to recent advances in the study on Epicurus and Epicureanism, mainly due to the new annotated critical editions of the Herculaneum Papyri, Bignone's thesis has been gradually marginalized. Most scholars have now reached the conclusion that Epicurus had a dialectical relationship with Aristotle's school treatises and closely engaged with many doctrines upheld by the Stagirite.[4]

Ancient sources confirm that Epicurus took account of Aristotle. In a passage from Simplicius (*On Aristotle's Physics* 925.13 Diels = 268 Usener = 154 Arrighetti[2]), Epicurus is presented as sharing the philosophy of Leucippus and Democritus, while being aware of the criticism that Aristotle had raised against the physics of the ancient Atomists. Leucippus and Democritus believed that

3 Jaeger 1923.

4 Gigante 1999.

the cause of the indivisibility of atoms was their impassivity, smallness, and lack of parts. Aristotle refuted this position by arguing that such bodies cannot exist. Epicurus, who came after Aristotle, went on to argue that atoms are indivisible because of their impassivity and not their lack of parts, as Aristotle himself had focused on this issue. The reference here is to the Epicurean doctrine of *minima* (ἐλάχιστα), mainly described in the *Letter to Herodotus* (56–59).[5] Simplicius' testimony is especially important because—if it is to be trusted—it confirms that Epicurus polemically engaged with Aristotle, and in particular with *Physics* 4, a text that seems to have been held in high regard in the Hellenistic age.[6]

Of the few extant texts by Epicurus, Aristotle's name appears only in the so-called *Letter on Occupations*, which according to some scholars may be identified with the *Letter to the Philosophers of Mytilene*.[7] The *Letter on Occupations* has been much discussed by scholars, who have considered this work to be a polemic in which Epicurus targets the philosophers mentioned in the title. With regard to Aristotle, Epicurus says that he was a profligate who, having dissipated his family's wealth, devoted himself to leading a military life and selling drugs. David Sedley has suggested that the letter is not polemical in tone.[8] Although Sedley's arguments are compelling, I would not rule out the possibility of a polemical intent. By describing the occupations of other philosophers, Epicurus could show that he had given himself over to philosophy from the very start, without first embarking on any other career. From Hermippus (Diogenes Laertius 10.2 = *FGrHistCont* 1026 F 82 Bollansée) we learn that Epicurus was in fact a school teacher (like his father) and turned to philosophy after coming across Democritus' books (68 A 52 DK; cf. Plutarch. *Against Colotes* 1108 E). It is difficult to tell whether Epicurus' biographical claims about Aristotle are true. Despite his thinly disguised polemical intent, Epicurus apparently showed considerable appreciation for the career of Aristotle, who, despite a non-philosophical past, developed a remarkable philosophical outlook (one which Epicurus later called into question—at least partially).

The text that has most influenced studies on the presence of Aristotle in the Garden comes from a Herculaneum papyrus. The text is part of a letter, (probably) by Epicurus, which was preserved by Philodemus in his book Πρὸς τοὺς φασκοβιβλιακούς (*Against Those Who Call Themselves Connoisseurs*

5 Verde 2015a.

6 Konstan 1987.

7 Cf. Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner* 8.354 B (= 171 Usener = 102 Arrighetti[2]); see also Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.93 = 235 Usener.

8 Sedley 1976: 126.

of Books; PHerc. 1005/862, fr. 111 Angeli = 127 Arrighetti[2]).[9] It seems to demonstrate Epicurus' knowledge not only of Aristippus' treatise *On Socrates*, and Speusippus' *Praise of Plato*, but also of Ἀριστοτέ[λους τὰ] Ἀναλυτικὰ καὶ [τὰ Περὶ] φύσεως, namely the *Analytics* (though it is difficult to tell whether *Prior* or *Posterior*), and Aristotle's books *On Nature*. On the basis of the title of Philodemus' work, it can be assumed that Philodemus aimed to introduce Epicurus (or the author of the letter) as an authentic connoisseur of books in order to preserve his philosophical credentials and exculpate him from the (traditional anti-Epicurean) charge of ignorance.

Our text has been subject to close scrutiny and has given rise to an array of reactions. A brief review of the most significant ones is in order. F. H. Sandbach has cast some doubt on the importance of this fragment, arguing that "[…] this scrap of Epicurus' letter proves very little and will not establish many of the claims that have been made for it."[10] Other scholars consider this passage particularly important, as "precious evidence that Epicurus read (and could read, because they obviously were accessible) […] the great Aristotelian treatises."[11] Sandbach quite rightly raises the question of the identification of τὰ περὶ φύσεως, observing that this expression is not necessarily a reference to Aristotle's *Physics*. Sandbach notes that, although Aristotle refers more than once to the *Physics* as τὰ περὶ φύσεως, he sometimes uses this expression to refer to the treatise *On the Heavens*.[12] If this were the reference in the case at hand, it would confirm Epicurus' knowledge of this work. In turn, this would support Schmid's hypothesis that some of the criticisms levelled against Plato's *Timaeus* in Epicurus' *On Nature*, Book 14, depend on the treatise *On the Heavens* (3.7, 306a20-b2)—even though the originality of Epicurus' polemic cannot be denied.[13] In a study published in 1976, David Sedley states that Epicurus' knowledge of Aristotle's school treatises "is virtually proved" by Philodemus' fragment, "in which Aristotle's *Analytics* are specifically named."[14] He notes that—as we will see in due course—Epicurus' only polemic against Aristotle to have been preserved concerns rhetoric and its teaching. Epicurus' polemical target, Sedley says, is more likely to be Theophrastus than Aristotle himself;

9 On the new title of this work by Philodemus (deriving from the second copy of the book preserved by *PHerc*. 1485), see now Del Mastro 2014: 184–187 and 324–325.

10 Sandbach 1985: 5.

11 Arrighetti 1973: 683.

12 Sandbach 1985: 5.

13 Schmid 1936 and 1944: 44–50; Leone 1984: 36–37; Verde 2010; Montarese 2012: 140–141. See also Gigante 1999: 37.

14 Sedley 1976: 126–127.

moreover, Plutarch attests that Epicurus wrote a work *Against Theophrastus* in at least two books.[15] To this, however, it should be added that Diogenes Laertius (10.24–25 = *Hermarchus* 25 Longo Auricchio) also cites a (lost) *Against Aristotle* among the most beautiful (κάλλιστα) writings by Hermarchus. Since we do not know the content of this work, it is difficult to say how much the author knew about Aristotle.[16] However, considering that Hermarchus was Epicurus' successor at the helm of the Athenian Garden, it is difficult to imagine that Hermarchus might have known any works by Aristotle which Epicurus did not. Even Bignone (paradoxically, one might say) considers the Philodemean fragment to provide further confirmation of his view.[17] Bignone believes that Philodemus is specifically quoting Epicurus' letter in order to acquit his master of the charge of ignorance raised by Timocrates, but above all as evidence that Epicurus' "pedagogical polemic" was aimed at the Academy and not the Lyceum. Bignone dates Epicurus' request to long after the death of Theophrastus (288–287 BC), that is, to a time when, according to the scholar, Aristotle's school works were no longer available. This means that, although Epicurus requested those works toward the end of his life, he had not yet read them, "so one can believe that he could not have them."[18] In his monograph on Aristotle, Ingmar Düring has made some important remarks regarding Theophrastus' publishing activity.[19] Almost as if to counterbalance Bignone's view, he has argued that evidence that Theophrastus (either directly or indirectly) edited the publication and dissemination of Aristotle's works is to be found in the fragment of the letter quoted by Philodemus. With reference to our Philodemean passage, Paul Moraux has maintained that "Epicurus himself, for example, used and excerpted Aristotle's *Analytics, Physics*, and *On the Heavens*."[20] Finally, after his 1976 study, David Sedley has returned to the Philodemean passage in his seminal book devoted to Lucretius, noting that the letter might belong to an Epicurean of the first generation, rather than Epicurus himself.[21] Sedley appears to have changed his mind on the significance of the testimony preserved by Philodemus: while admitting that the Περὶ

15 Plutarch. *Against Colotes* 1110 C (= 30 Usener). See the remarks by Gigante 1999: 52–53. On the doctrinal relationship between Epicurus and Theophrastus (also on the basis of Lucretius), see Sedley 1998a: chapter 6, and 1998b.

16 Sandbach 1985: 6.

17 Bignone 1973: I 466–471.

18 Bignone 1973: I 470.

19 Düring 1966: 46.

20 Moraux 1973: 11 (see also n. 22).

21 Sedley 1998a: 183n54.

φύσεως cited is a reference to Aristotle's *Physics*, he concludes that "there is no indication whether he [sc. Epicurus] has read it, or, if he has, at what date."[22]

As the above review clearly indicates, scholarly opinion on the Philodemean passage is by no means unanimous; although the issue is a problematic one, to completely dismiss the information preserved by Philodemus—who of course may be accused of distorting his sources in defense of his master and against the charge of ignorance levelled against him—means disputing the claim that "these works were part of the Garden and circulated in the school of Athens and the micro-Asiatic centers."[23] Unfortunately, much uncertainty remains regarding the identification of the Περὶ φύσεως mentioned by Philodemus, even though it can be argued that Epicurus is referring to some of Aristotle's physical treatises, albeit not necessarily our *Physics*.[24] From this point of view, even though the issue remains controversial, Philodemus' passage provides precious evidence confirming the idea that Aristotle's logic and physics attracted considerable interest in the Garden.

3 The Indirect Presence of Aristotle in Epicurus

In a pioneering book on atomism, Cyril Bailey notes that while "traces of the influence of Aristotle" are detectable in Epicurus' writing, "there is never a word of polemic" against him, since "Epicurus' controversy is with the pre-Socratics, and his debt, unacknowledged and even violently denied, is to Leucippus and Democritus."[25] Bailey's view is incomplete, but he is perfectly right to speak of "traces" of Aristotle in Epicurus. Strictly speaking, we can only talk about traces, since there is no explicit evidence of any polemic against Aristotle on Epicurus' part or of any influence of the Stagirite on the Samian philosopher. Diogenes Laertius begins his *Life of Epicurus* by noting that Epicurus came to Athens for the first time at the age of eighteen, when Xenocrates was the scholarch of the Academy and Aristotle was in Chalcis. This report has more than just chronological value. The source from which Diogenes derives it must have shown that, when Epicurus was in Athens, he could attend Xenocrates' lectures (as is indeed most likely),[26] but not those of Aristotle, who was in Chalcis

22 Ibid.

23 Angeli 1988: 237; see also Gigante 1999: 40.

24 Rist 1972: ix.

25 Bailey 1928: 220.

26 Verde 2013a: II.2.1.1.

at the time. Epicurus, therefore, would not have had the opportunity to be in contact with Aristotle during his *ephebia*.

Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that Epicurus came into contact with the Peripatos in later years. In his *Chronicles*, Apollodorus (Diogenes Laertius 10.13 = *FGH* 244 F 41) reports that Epicurus was a pupil of Nausiphanes, a Democritean with Pyrrhonian inclinations, and the Peripatetic Praxiphanes. Regrettably, the text is corrupt, and it is doubtful whether Apollodorus even mentioned Praxiphanes.[27] To begin with, Epicurus denied that he was anyone's pupil. In the *Letter to Eurylochus* (123 Usener = 48 Arrighetti[2]), Epicurus presents himself as self-taught. Moreover, the identification of Praxiphanes with the disciple of Theophrastus, is problematic, to the extent that it seems unlikely for chronological reasons that he could have been Epicurus' teacher. Nevertheless, we cannot exclude the possibility that Praxiphanes and Epicurus may have come in contact in some way. What is certain is that Praxiphanes' view of friendship became a polemical target for Carneiscus, a first-generation Epicurean, judging from the second book of his *Philistas*.[28] It is clear that to rule out the hypothesis that Epicurus may have had a Peripatetic teacher means to dismiss an important clue in favor of the Epicurean proximity to the Lyceum. It should be added, finally, that according to the sources (Diogenes Laertius 10.14 = *Pamphilus* 19 T 2 Lasserre) Epicurus was also a student of the Platonist Pamphilus; so when we look at the extant evidence as a whole we cannot exclude the existence of a rather malevolent biographical tradition according to which Epicurus was the pupil of a Platonist (Pamphilus), a Democritean (Nausiphanes), and a Peripatetic (Praxiphanes). This sort of pedigree is a challenge to the originality of Epicurus' philosophy, whereas it is very likely that Nausiphanes was Epicurus' real master.[29] Of course, even if we exclude the possibility that Praxiphanes may have been his teacher, Epicurus may well have become acquainted with Peripatetic philosophy in other ways.

Epicurus' philosophical system is organized into three parts: canonics, physics, and ethics. This order is fixed, and directed toward ethics. I would like to review, briefly, the evidence of an indirect or hidden presence of Aristotle in each of these parts. In the first part of his philosophical system, Epicurus does away with definitions and classifications, and declines to teach how to correctly develop and conclude arguments (Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.22). In short, he completely rejects dialectic by arguing that, for those who

27 The latest editor of Diogenes Laertius (Dorandi 2013: 741) inserts καὶ Πραξιφάνους between *cruces*.

28 Edited in Capasso 1988.

29 Cf. Sextus Empiricus *Against the Professor* 1.1–6.

investigate nature, sounds (that is, the natural names of things) are sufficient.[30] It is unnecessary to study nature dialectically. One must simply rely on the original names of things (closely related to sense-perceptions: *Letter to Herodotus* 76)[31] in order to conduct a correct and error-free analysis. By rejecting logic, Epicurus maintains that canonics (i.e. the epistemological part of his philosophical system)—unlike Aristotle's logic (which is an *organon* or instrument for philosophical inquiry)—is not a tool but a means of access (ἔφοδος: Diogenes Laertius 10.30) to the whole of his doctrine. The structure of canonics is defined by its canons or criteria,[32] which are sense-perceptions (αἰσθήσεις), preconceptions (προλήψεις), and affections (πάθη). Later Epicureans also added the representative applications of thought (φανταστικαὶ ἐπιβολαὶ τῆς διανοίας: Diogenes Laertius 10.31). The crucial point common to these criteria is that they are not objects of demonstration.[33] Given that they are tools for achieving knowledge of nature (through their application), they cannot be objects of further demonstration. If this were not the case, canonics would slip into an infinite regress, which is something Epicurus clearly wishes to avoid as much as Aristotle. Indeed, even Aristotle points out that the science concerning immediate premises is independent of demonstration (*Posterior Analytics* 1.3, 72b18–27).

A proximity to Aristotle is observable also in the decisive role played by sense-perception (see *Letter to Herodotus* 38–39 and *Principal Doctrines* 24) and memory in the formation of preconception. In the first book of the *Metaphysics* (1.1, 980b28–981a1), Aristotle describes the formation of experience, arguing that it stems from memory; many memories of the same thing make up the δύναμις of a single experience.[34] From Diogenes Laertius (10.33–34), we learn that the formation of preconceptions in Epicurus takes place in a not entirely dissimilar way from the process of formation of experience described by Aristotle: preconceptions are indeed formed through the accumulation ensured by the memory of repeated sense-perceptions. Aristotle certainly acknowledges the absolute importance of sense-perceptions (which are

30 Cf. Diogenes Laertius 10.31, and Sedley (forthcoming).

31 On the differences between Aristotle's and Epicurus' linguistic theories, see the overview provided by Sedley 1973: 20.

32 On the Aristotelian use of κριτήριον in Aristotle (significantly linked to sense-perception), cf. *Metaphysics* 11.6, 1063a 2–3.

33 Ierodiakonou 2012.

34 Cf. Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 2.19, 99b34–100a9. I should briefly recall that Epicurus' *On Nature* 2 (*PHerc*. 1149/993 and 1783/1691/1010) and, more generally, the doctrine of εἴδωλα or *simulacra*—the basis of any atomistic doctrine of perception—was most likely the object of severe attacks from the Peripatetics. See Leone 2012: 92ff., and Verde 2015b.

κυριώταται: see *Metaphysics* 1.1, 981b11), but he is also aware that they cannot be identified with theoretical wisdom (σοφία), since they are not able to explain the cause of anything. According to Aristotle, as is well-known, science is knowledge of causes (*Metaphysics* 1.3, 983a24–26, but see also Lucretius 6.50–55).

Let us turn to physics and ethics, where the indirect influence of Aristotle is most noticeable. Epicurus' concept of the void, as summarized in the *Letter to Herodotus* 40, is much indebted to the doctrine of the void of the ancient Atomists (Leucippus and Democritus). But it is also more innovative and refined, especially in its implicit references to Plato's *Timaeus*[35] and *Physics* 4, where Aristotle refutes the Atomists' doctrine of the void.[36] Epicurus seems to rework the unitary notion of the void upheld by Leucippus and Democritus on the basis of its relationship with the bodies (atoms). The matter is rather complex because our sources tell different stories on this issue. While in the *Letter to Herodotus* Epicurus seems to place void (κενόν), space (χώρα), and intangible nature (ἀναφὴς φύσις) on the same level, Lucretius (1.418–429) presents place (*locus*) and space (*spatium*) as names of the void.[37] Furthermore, in *Against the Physicists* (*Against the Professors* 10.2 = 271 Usener), Sextus Empiricus offers yet another view: he states that, according to Epicurus, one part of so-called intangible nature is called void, another place, and another still space. A doxographical passage in Aëtius (1.20.1 = 271 Usener) appears to agree with Sextus' testimony. There, we read that Epicurus distinguished between void, place, and space only in name.[38] Sextus clarifies how the absence, presence, or transit of bodies allow us to use different names: intangible nature takes the name "void" (κενόν) when it is not occupied by bodies, "place" (τόπος) when it is occupied by bodies, and "space" (χώρα) when it allows bodies to move through it. The Epicurean use of the term "χώρα" clearly recalls the χώρα of Plato's *Timaeus* (48 E–53 C), although Epicurus consciously accentuates the spatial meaning of this noun, whereas Timaeus assigns χώρα the function of a receptacle too. In addition, the fact that Epicurus defines one aspect of intangible nature as place is highly revealing. In the *Physics* Aristotle sets out not only to disprove the existence of the void (*Physics* 4.8, 216a26–b16) but also to rule out the possibility that void, even if it did exist, could ever be a place (*Physics* 4.8, 214b17–28). According to the ancient Atomists as well as Epicurus, the existence of the void is the necessary condition for movement: if there is movement, there is void (and *vice versa*). Epicurus is firmly convinced

35 Sedley 1982.

36 Inwood 1981.

37 Verde 2013c: 103–106, and Lévy 2014: 130–137.

38 Mansfeld 2014: 190–192.

that, in order to perform its function as the main condition of the possibility of movement, void must be place. Aristotle, on the contrary, criticizes those who infer the existence of movement from the existence of the void (i.e. the ancient Atomists). He completely reverses the Atomistic argument by arguing that the void is precisely the condition of *impossibility* of movement (*Physics* 4.8, 214b28–31). Why, he asks, should a body move in the infinite void if it lacks any determination? It is perhaps to reply to this objection that Epicurus not only considers the void a place and space where bodies may or may not move but also believes that, although it is inconceivable for there to be any absolute top and bottom in the infinite void, there may be said to be a relative top and bottom, so that bodies are able to move in different directions relative to other moving bodies (*Letter to Herodotus* 60).

Another example of the indirect influence of Aristotle on Epicurus is the doctrine of minimal parts outlined in the *Letter to Herodotus* (55–59), which constitutes a significant innovation with respect to ancient Atomism. Epicurus conceives of these minimal and partless magnitudes (ἐλάχιστα and ἀμερῆ) as limits (πέρατα) of the atom. Now, when Aristotle deals with time in the *Physics*, he draws a clear distinction between part (μέρος) and limit (πέρας) (*Physics* 4.10, 218a6–24). Only a part can serve as a unit of measure. By contrast, a limit cannot measure anything, for parts can be detached from the wholes to which they belong, while even if it were possible to detach limits from the things they limit (as it is not), this would mean that they were no longer limits. The now (νῦν) is not a part but a limit of time. This means that the now is not a unit of time-measurement, because it is not a part of time. Consequently, time cannot be made up of nows. It is very likely that Epicurus knew the Aristotelian distinction between μέρος and πέρας and adopted it, but not without a radical change of meaning. Stating that the atomic minima are limits, Epicurus claims that, as a limit can never be detached from whatever entity it limits, so the ἐλάχιστα cannot under any circumstances be detached from the existing limits (i.e. the atoms themselves). Unlike Aristotle, Epicurus believes that minimal magnitudes, while constituting limits, are units of measurement (καταμετρήματα), and are able to provide a magnitude. By doing so, Epicurus justifies the indivisibility of the atom. Since this is made up of ἐλάχιστα/*minima* (as limits), the latter can never be detached from the atom itself.[39]

One of the most significant differences between Aristotle and Epicurus is that, unlike the former (for whom each part of philosophical knowledge pursues a specific purpose, and for whom there are very precise distinctions

39 On this topic, see O'Brien 2007; Verde 2013a: chapter 11.2.2; and (with some caution) Gœury 2013.

between the different branches of philosophy), the latter maintains that each scientific or, more generally, philosophical survey *always* has an ethical purpose.[40] It is for this reason that—again very differently from Aristotle, who to Epicurus' eyes raises empty arguments—*every* Epicurean topic has therapeutic value, its aim being the care of the soul and the achievement of imperturbability.[41] From this point of view, it is easier to understand why the opening of the *Letter to Menoeceus* has rightly been considered a deliberate Epicurean counterpoint to the famous Aristotelian *Exhortation to Philosophy* [*Protrepticus*]. Epicurus' exhortation to philosophy is not exclusively directed to young people—the ideal addressee of Aristotle's *Protrepticus*—but to everybody, provided they are fully aware that no one is ever too young or too old to attain happiness. We find here a difference of capital importance between Aristotelian and Epicurean ethics: the former concerns the σπουδαῖος, namely the excellent man provided with virtue (and possibly specific political attitudes), while the latter is a universal message of earthly salvation addressed to everybody (women and slaves included).[42]

Although Aristotle's ethics differs from that of Epicurus, there is complete (and, perhaps, unexpected) agreement between the two on the positive role of pleasure.[43] There is no doubt that pleasure, understood as the absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul (*Letter to Menoeceus* 131), is the cornerstone of Epicurean ethics. Aristotle does not employ a negative notion of pleasure as the "absence of pain," but he does have a positive answer to the question whether pleasure is good. According to Aristotle, the life devoted to pleasure is one of three kinds of life (the others are dedicated to politics and to philosophy): he grants neither that pleasure must absolutely be avoided, nor that it coincides with the highest good. The pleasure associated with intellectual contemplation or virtuous and upright action is considered a perfection of the activity (*Nicomachean Ethics* 10.3, 1174b33–34 and 10.5, 1175a36)[44] which in turn is identified with happiness, defined as the soul's acting according to virtue (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1.6, 1098a15–20). For this reason, pleasure cannot have different degrees of intensity (*Nicomachean Ethics* 10.3, 1174b16–23 and

40 Cf. *Principal Doctrines* 11–12, and Cicero, *On Goals* 4.11–12. See Spinelli 2012.

41 Cf. Plutarch, *That It Is Impossible To Live Pleasurably Following Epicurus* 1091 B = 423 Usener and Porphyry *Letter to Marcella* 31, 209 23 N = 221 Usener.

42 Arrighetti 1980.

43 Merlan 1960: 1–37. For an analysis of the similarities and differences between Epicurus' notion of φρόνησις (*Letter to Menoeceus* 132) and that of Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* 6), see Morel 2010.

44 On the Epicurean use of ἐνέργεια, see Verde 2013a: 4n18.

1174b5–14) as, for example, we read in Plato's *Philebus* (23 C–28 D), where pleasure, belonging to the genus of infinity, admits of greater and lesser degrees. Pleasure, Aristotle continues, is neither movement nor generation, but it is "something whole" (ὅλον [. . .] τι: *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.3, 1174b14): as long as it exists, it is necessarily complete (*Nicomachean Ethics* 10.3, 1174a13–b14). On this point, Epicurus agrees with Aristotle: time (whether infinite or finite) cannot increase pleasure (*Principal Doctrines* 19) since, after the elimination of pain, there can be no deeper or more intense (katastematic) pleasure. At most, it might be subjected to some variation (*Principal Doctrines* 28).[45]

In one of the *Tischreden* (*Table Talks*) delivered in the summer and autumn of 1542, Martin Luther asserted that in the theological field "*Aristoteles est prorsus Epicurus*," since both believed that the gods were inactive in human affairs, thereby ruling out any form of providence.[46] This similarity in theology had already been detected by the Middle-Platonist Atticus (fr. 3 Des Places *apud* Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 15.5.1–14), who concluded that that Epicurus' position was better and preferable to Aristotle's. Atticus writes that, according to Epicurus, men derive a real benefit (ὄνησις) from the gods. Indeed, their best emanations (ἀπόρροιαι) are cooperating causes (παραίτιαι) of many goods for those who take part in them. Aristotle and Epicurus, however, can be associated not only with regard to this point, but also because their gods live a blessed and hence enjoyable life. The contemplative activity of the first unmoved mover is a source of pleasure (*Metaphysics* 12.7, 1072b14–18) because its activity is not tiring. As suggested by the exegesis of Ps-Alexander of Aphrodisias (*On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 697.4–6 Hayduck), given that the activity of the first unmoved mover is to think itself (τὸ νοεῖν ἑαυτόν), its activity coincides with its pleasure. According to Epicurus the condition of divinity (which is not motionless: Philodemus, *On the Gods* 3 [*PHerc*. 152/157] col. 10.6–7 Diels)[47] is the absolute beatitude due to its eternal indissolubility (*Letter to Menoeceus* 123 and *Principal Doctrines* 1). The Epicurean god lives an eternally pleasant life, and, *mutatis mutandis*, one that makes him akin to the first unmoved mover, although Aristotle assigns his god fundamental features such as thought and life (*Metaphysics* 12.7, 1072b24–30) that Epicurus does not emphasize or even mention, although in his *Letter to Meneoeceus* (123) god is regarded as ζῷον. Yet both philosophers urge men to imitate the perfect and blessed life as much as possible. Aristotle does so because he believes that theoretical contemplation is the best activity of all; Epicurus because he believes

45 Diano 1974: 28–128, and Wolfsdorf 2013: chapter 7.

46 WA TR 5. Nr. 5440.

47 Essler 2014: 118–121.

that only by imitating the perfect condition of the gods one may live like a god among men (*Letter to Menoeceus* 135).[48]

4 Epicurus, the Epicureans, and the Peripatetics

The most recent studies and findings—especially those coming from the new editions of the Herculaneum Papyri—have helped to clarify the following, important point: Epicurus and the Epicureans were in controversy (or, at any rate, in dialectical conversation) with the Peripatetics. For reasons of brevity, I will recall only a few instances from this rich and complex dossier.

Epicurus likely wrote a work *Against Theophrastus* (Plutarch, *Against Colotes* 1110 C = 30 Usener) in at least two books, or, at any rate, a text addressed to Theophrastus where the topics discussed included physics, and color theory in particular. If Crönert is right in his reconstruction of a section of *PHerc*. 1111 (fr. 44.8–12 = *Metrodorus* 14 Koerte), the Epicurean Metrodorus (331/330–278/277 BC), one of Epicurus' closest friends, authored a work *Against Aristotle*, whose content we do not know.[49] From Diogenes Laertius (10.24–25 = *Hermarchus* 25 Longo Auricchio), we know that among the most beautiful (κάλλιστα) books by Hermarchus, the first scholarch of the Garden after Epicurus' death (271/270 BC), there was another work *Against Aristotle* (Πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλην). Finally, from Philodemus' *On Piety* (*PHerc*. 1098, col. 38, 1092–1095 Obbink),[50] we learn that Polyaenus (whose death is placed around 290/280 BC) probably criticized Aristotle's *On Philosophy* in a text specifically devoted to Aristotle's now lost dialogue on philosophy.

However, it would be an oversimplification to assume that the relationship between the Kepos and the Peripatos was exclusively polemical. Theophrastus' influence on Epicurus is evidence to the contrary. This influence can be studied from different perspectives. To begin with, Theophrastus' *Physikai doxai* were an important doxographical source (especially about the Presocratics, as Lucretius explicitly confirms too) for some of Epicurus' works. Moreover, the *Letter to Pythocles*— devoted to celestial, earthly, and meteorological phenomena (τὰ μετέωρα)—shows a significant Peripatetic influence (but without any concession to teleology). This influence can be traced back to Theophrastus'

48 Erler 2002.

49 Crönert 1906: 24n136. Koerte 1890: 546 gives a different interpretation of this passage, supposing it was part of a work *Against Aristo* by Metrodorus.

50 The passage would coincide with Polyaenus' fr. 30 Tepedino Guerra 1991, which, however, follows Gomperz's edition.

Meteorology (or *Metarsiology*) rather than Aristotle's *Meteorology* (although we cannot exclude that Epicurus may have used the latter as a doxographical resource). Finally, the similarity between Epicurus' method of multiple explanations (πλεοναχὸς τρόπος: *Letter to Pythocles* 86–87) and the method adopted (though not without crucial adjustments) by Theophrastus (see, for instance, *On Fire* 1.4–11) is also noteworthy. However, the issue of whether Theophrastus influenced the method of multiple explanations remains a thorny one: while an influence of this kind is quite possible, it is necessary to note the important differences between the Theophrastean perspective and the Epicurean view.[51]

I would now like to touch upon the case of Lucretius. Recent studies have found clear Aristotelian traces in sections of his poem.[52] The zoological and biological sections of the poem, for instance, appear to be deeply indebted to the Aristotelian treatises. The influence of Aristotle (whose writing Lucretius would have known through compendia or doxographies) seems even more likely in light of the almost total absence of biological subjects in the works of Epicurus (for example in the surviving sections of his *On Nature*).[53] Since we do not possess the whole Epicurean corpus, we cannot be certain that Epicurus did not deal with zoology or biology in his writings. Hence, it cannot be excluded that Lucretius may have found these Aristotelian biological themes in the writings of Epicurus or other Epicureans. Nevertheless, during the age of Lucretius and Cicero, it is quite certain that compendia of Aristotle's (often obscure and highly technical) works were accessible in libraries and circulated within learned circles.[54]

The Epicurean engagement with Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition is well-documented in the first century BC beyond the case of Lucretius. Let us recall, first of all, *PHerc*. 1389 (*Zeno Sidonius* 16 Angeli-Colaizzo), which preserves the third book of a work by Philodemus of Gadara on sense-perceptions based on the lectures of his teacher, Zeno of Sidon.[55] From the first column of the papyrus (p. 103 Angeli-Colaizzo), it seems that Zeno criticized the relationship between perceptual phenomena and definitions (λόγοι ὁριστικοί), probably by reworking a polemic first launched by Epicurus against the syllogistic

51 Mansfeld 1994 and Sedley 1998a: chapter 6; see now Verde 2013b. It is worth remembering that even the Epicurean *meretricula* Leontius wrote against Theophrastus (at least according to Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.93 = 28* Usener).

52 Schrijvers 1997 and Tutrone 2006. The question of the presence of Aristotle in Lucretius is related to the Epicurean fundamentalism of Lucretius (Sedley 1998a: chapter 3), questioned by Schmidt (1990: 223) and Montarese (2012: chapter 3).

53 Runia 1997.

54 Rocca 2003: 49–57.

55 Del Mastro 2014: 256–259.

method (*On Nature* XXVIII [*PHerc*. 1479/1417] fr. 13 col. 2 sup. Sedley = 31.11 Arrighetti[2]). It is conceivable that Zeno took up an argument from Epicurus and adapted it to his own polemic against the adequacy of the principles, as is suggested by some passages from Proclus commentary on the first book of Euclide's *Elements* (199.3–200.6 Friedlein = F46 Edelstein-Kidd; 214.15–218.11 Friedlein = F47 Edelstein-Kidd = *Zeno Sidonius* 27 Angeli-Colaizzo).[56] More directly, if behind the λόγοι ὁριστικοί lies Aristotle's doctrine of definition and, more generally, his notion of demonstrative science, then Aristotle must have been among Zeno's targets. Moreover, we know that one of the charges levelled against Epicurus was precisely that he had abolished all definitions (*tollit definitiones*: Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.22).[57]

However, if there is one text where the Epicurean polemic against Aristotle is clear and direct, this is the well-known passage from (what is likely) Book 8 of Philodemus' *Rhetoric* (*PHerc*. 832/1015, col. 54.10–19, II p. 58 Sudhaus; p. 40 Blank). By drawing upon what is probably a passage from Epicurus' work *On the Kinds of Life* (10.4 Arrighetti), the text preserves a critique by Epicurus of Aristotle on rhetoric and its teaching. A translation of this short text runs as follows: "on the whole he [sc. Aristotle] showed himself, according to Epicurus, to be a more formidable opponent of the salvation of human life than those who directly oiled up (students) for the political context, since he enchanted them with a hope of the truth" (Blank 2007: 46). According to Philodemus, Epicurus considers Aristotle a formidable opponent to the salvation of life, one even worse than those who, with the help of rhetoric, educate others on politics. For, unlike them, Aristotle has the presumption to seduce his students with the promise of truth. The charge is that through his teaching of rhetoric, Aristotle promises truth (which obviously he does not possess), thereby completely deluding his students. Epicurus adds that Aristotle is the most dangerous enemy of the salvation of human life, which is precisely the goal of Epicurus' philosophy.[58] This is one of the reasons why according to Epicurus (especially in light of his polemic against Nausiphanes)[59] rhetoric is a useless and harmful artifice (κακοτεχνία) compared to genuine philosophical inquiry.[60] Aristotle, vying with Isocrates, introduced a kind of rhetoric closely linked to

56 Verde 2013a: chapter III.1.4.

57 Giovacchini 2003.

58 Dorandi 1994, Blank 2007: 30, and Erbì 2011: 197–198 and 204–205.

59 Porter 2002, and Warren 2002: 160–192.

60 Cf. Ammianus Marcellinus, *History* 30.4.3 (= 51* Usener = 20.3 Arrighetti[2]); Cicero, *On Goals* 1.71–72 (= 227 Usener), and *Scholia to Dionysus Thrax* 108.27 Hilgard (= 227b Usener = 231 Arrighetti[2]). Some of Sextus Empiricus' arguments against the usefulness of rhetoric may rehash Epicurean material (e.g. *Against the Professors* 2.49).

philosophy, a completely absurd mixture to the eyes of Epicurus.[61] Only philosophical inquiry can really lead to salvation and happiness, because only philosophy can teach and provide the real truth, which has nothing to do with rhetoric. These passages from Philodemus are very useful not only for exploring the question of the course on rhetoric that Aristotle is likely to have held when he was in the Academy, but also to better understand the reasons for Philodemus' criticism of Aristotle on the idea and function of rhetoric.[62]

It should also be emphasized that Philodemus is a crucial source (and in some cases the only one) for reconstructing some of the doctrines of the "Peripatetic galaxy," that is, all those Peripatetic philosophers (such as Theophrastus, Hieronymus of Rhodes, Demetrius of Phalerum, Phanias of Eresus, Dicaearchus, Chamaeleon, Aristo of Ceos, Critolaus, and Neoptolemus of Parium)[63] who attracted Epicurean interest.

Philodemus, finally, is a valuable source because, at least according to Richard Janko (who in turn re-elaborates an intuition first voiced by Francesco Sbordone), the last column of the fourth book of Philodemus' Περὶ ποιημάτων (*On Poems*) preserved by *PHerc*. 207 contains substantial sections of Aristotle's (lost) dialogue *On the Poets* (Περὶ ποιητικῆς καὶ ποιητῶν διάλογος, according to Janko's reconstruction, 385–389). Although there are reasons to treat Janko's hypothesis and reconstruction with caution,[64] they are most attractive: Philodemus would not be criticizing Aristotle's *Poetics*, but his dialogue on the poets, of which we know little. Janko even provides a reconstruction of the organization of Aristotle's lost work, offering a new edition of the lost dialogue.[65] The main theme of the parts preserved by Philodemus was *mimesis* and its relation to the various literary genres (an issue studied also in the more famous *Poetics*).

These are just a few examples from a large and complex picture of which we cannot give full account here. However, the cases examined clearly testify to an almost unbroken and fruitful dialogue between the two philosophical schools on several doctrinal matters.

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61 Dorandi 1989.

62 Privitera 2007, and Berti 1999.

63 On the (likely polemical) relationship between the Peripatetics Clearchus of Soli and Strato of Lampsacus and Epicurus, see Sedley (forthcoming), and Verde 2012.

64 See Dorandi 2011.

65 Janko 2011: 313–539.

5 Conclusion

The relationship between Aristotle and Epicurus, the Peripatetics and the Epicureans, is best described as dialectical. While Epicurus and his followers did indeed engage with Aristotle and the Peripatos from a polemical perspective, this is only half of the story. The idea of a strictly polemical relationship probably best describes Epicurus' approach to Plato and Platonism. Our sources, although scarce and not always easy to read, confirm Epicurus' interest in Aristotle's doctrines and, more generally, Peripatetic philosophy. Although the Hellenistic circulation of the unpublished works of Aristotle remains a much debated question, it is very likely that Epicurus and the Epicureans had a good overall knowledge of Aristotle's writings (including his so-called lost works, as Philodemus' *On Poems* 4 perhaps shows, for example). This interest led the philosopher and his successors to engage closely with Aristotelian doctrines, sometimes by attacking them directly and vehemently, at other times by refashioning them.[66] This means that Epicureanism was in dialogue with the great philosophical systems of the fifth and fourth centuries BC, and hence that Hellenism marked no real break in the philosophical debate.

The theme of the relationship between the Kepos and the Peripatos deserves to be further discussed in light of the recent publication of new sources and latest historical-philosophical research in the field. In the meantime, it is clear that any reconstruction of ancient Aristotelianism cannot ignore the significant contribution provided by Epicurean sources. But the opposite also holds true: any study of Epicureanism which takes no account of its close dialectical relationship with Aristotle and the Peripatetics would be restrictive and historically short-sighted.

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66 A further example might be the concept of συμβεβηκός, to which Epicurus ascribes a diametrically different meaning from the Aristotelian definition (cf. *Letter to Herodotus* 68–71, and Lucretius 1.449–458).

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CHAPTER 3

Aristotle and the Stoa

Thomas Bénatouïl

1 Introduction

It might be useful, as a start, to compare our evidence concerning the early Stoic reception of Aristotle to that concerning Epicureanism as described in the previous chapter. The direct or explicit presence of Aristotle in fragments of the founder of Stoicism, Zeno, is even more scarce than in the surviving works of Epicurus: we only learn that Zeno reported that his master Crates once read Aristotle's *Exhortation to Philosophy* [*Protrepticus*],[1] and that Zeno knew his audience to be smaller than Theophrastus' but believed it to be "more harmonious."[2] We also have a couple of fragments of Chrysippus referring explicitly to Aristotle. Still, this information is very meager, and all the more so if we bear in mind the many references by early Stoics, and especially Chrysippus, to past philosophers like Heraclitus, Antisthenes, Democritus, Plato, and Stilpon. It is only in Posidonius that we find several direct references to Aristotle by a prominent Stoic, most often to explanations of natural phenomena, as we shall see presently.

As for the indirect or hidden presence of Aristotle in early Stoicism, there are very few early Stoic doctrines that can be *securely* shown to depend on Aristotle, as famously argued by Sandbach.[3] However, his analysis is too heavily focused on denying the availability of Aristotle's esoteric works during the Hellenistic age, and his requirements are often too strong as far as establishing influence is concerned.[4] A concept can be borrowed by an author from another *and adapted* to its new context, thus producing differences between

* I would like to thank Andrea Falcon for his comments on an earlier draft of this chapter, and Jean-Baptiste Gourinat for generously providing me with a copy of his unpublished paper about the Stoics and Aristotle.

1 Stobaeus, *Anthology* 95.21 (= *SVF* 1.273). The following abbreviations will be used hereafter: *SVF* = H. von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta;* *LS* = A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers;* *FDS* = K. Hüsler, *Die Fragmente zur Dialektik der Stoiker*.

2 Plutarch, *How One May Be Aware of His Progress in Virtue* 78 D. Cf. Diogenes Laertius 7.73.

3 Sandbach 1985.

4 See the critical analysis of Sandbach's methodology by Hahm 1991.

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the two uses and ensuing definitions of the concept that are not incompatible with an actual influence. Moreover, as shown in the case of Epicurus, some Hellenistic authors entered into a dialectical relationship with Aristotle.[5] They took into account his discussion of pre-Aristotelian doctrines they favored, and tried to defend them against Aristotle's objections. Couldn't we hypothesize and sometimes establish such a dialectical relationship between some Stoics and Aristotle?

Still, we should retain Sandbach's admonition that Aristotle was not necessarily as highly regarded in the Hellenistic age as he would be later in antiquity, and that we should thus assess his influence based on the evidence rather than presupposing that his texts were known as well to Zeno or Chrysippus as they are to us. In fact, Sandbach's book put the last nail in the coffin of an approach not unusual in earlier studies, which considered Stoicism as a more or less crude version of Aristotelianism. This reading has its origins in the Hellenistic age. It is well known that, in the first century BC, Antiochus of Ascalon claimed to recover the doctrines of the Ancient Academy. In his view, this doctrine was shared by Plato, Aristotle, and their immediate followers and plagiarized by the Stoics from Zeno onward, who had learned the doctrine from his master Polemo and cloaked it in technical vocabulary that did not change its substance.[6] Even before Antiochus, Carneades accused the Stoics of agreeing *de re* and disagreeing only *de nomine* with the Peripatetics as far as ethics was concerned.[7]

This ancient debate forces us to be cautious in relying on certain sources, such as Cicero or Plutarch, for information about the relationships between Stoicism and Aristotle. It also makes it more difficult for us to assess the evolution of Stoic attitudes toward Aristotle. While the Epicurean attitude in this regard remained remarkably stable over time, the Stoic relationship with the Peripatos and the Academy probably evolved with Posidonius and his master Panaetius, who is said by Philodemus and Cicero to have had Academic and Peripatetic leanings, often quoting Plato, Aristotle, Xenocrates, Theophrastus, and Dicaerchus.[8] Nevertheless, the extent to which they were influenced by Plato and Aristotle remains controversial.

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5 See chapter 2 (Aristotle and the Garden), especially the conclusion.

6 On Antiochus, see now Sedley 2012.

7 See Cicero, *On Goals* 3.41, *On the Laws* 1.53, *Tusculan Disputations* 5.120. Cf. Lévy 1992: 391–394.

8 Philodemus, *History of the Stoics* (*PHerc.* 1018), col. 61 Dorandi, and Cicero, *On Goals* 4.79 (= Fr. 1 and 55 Alesse). On these testimonies, see Tieleman 2007: 108–116. In Philodemus' summary of Diogenes of Seleucia's *On Music*, one can find many Academics and Peripatetics quoted, but not Aristotle.

In this chapter, I will not be able to deal with the whole history of the Stoa from Zeno to Marcus Aurelius, let alone with all its possible interactions with Aristotle's texts and doctrines. Rather, I will focus on the early Stoics and their explicit references to Aristotle. As already mentioned, there are few such references but their import has been underestimated: taking them as a point of departure can help us distinguish with some degree of plausibility between the areas of Stoic philosophy which may depend on a discussion with Aristotle and those in which there is no evidence of any interaction. In the rest of this chapter we will adopt a topical approach to the extant evidence by dealing successively with each of the three parts of Stoic philosophy, ending with the one in which Aristotle's imprint is, albeit controversial, more certain and widespread, namely ethics.

2 Physics

Physics is the part of Stoic philosophy where a strong Aristotelian imprint has been most often hypothesized but where the explicit evidence is the thinnest.[9] It is thus a good place to start in order to establish a number of methodological principles.

First, one should never lose sight of the discrepancy between the Aristotelian corpus available to us and what remains of Stoic texts. It is easy, and for that very reason risky, to look for anticipations of Stoic terms or positions in Aristotle's works (or Plato's dialogues for that matter), because the texts compared are crucially unbalanced as far as size is concerned, and we usually do not know the real significance of a Stoic fragment (for lack of knowledge of its context), let alone whether the author of the fragment actually read Aristotle's treatises.

Moreover, many texts that could be relevant to establishing the origins of Stoic philosophy have been lost, particularly works by Socratics other than Plato and by Academics such as Xenocrates and Polemo. A correspondence between Aristotle and Stoicism is evidence of Aristotelian influence only if no other philosopher better known to the Stoics held views or used a vocabulary similar to Aristotle's on the same topic. For example, David Hahm insists on parallels between Aristotle's and Zeno's criticism of the Platonic ideas, down to the use of the example of the horse, but both were anticipated by Antisthenes'

9 Sandbach (1985: 31) attributes the popularity of this view to Zeller's authority and refers to other scholars and chiefly to Hahm 1977.

objections,[10] and we have more evidence of his influence on early Stoics than of Aristotle's.

Another well-known and interesting case is the Stoic concept of matter as the "passive principle" of all beings (Diogenes Laertius 7.85). The Stoics' use of the term "ὕλη" and their definition of matter as that which is without any quality (ἄποιος) are easy to connect with Aristotle.[11] However, this does not mean that Zeno simply lifted this notion from Aristotle's texts (or from oral accounts of his doctrines). First, we have to remember that on several issues Aristotle was perceived by early Hellenistic authors as a member of the Academic tradition, not as divergent from Plato and his successors, as we hold him to be.[12] Zeno could have posited matter as a principle, knowing he was not the first to do so, but without thinking he was adopting a specifically Aristotelian view. One can after all find a similar notion in the "receptacle" of the *Timaeus* and probably in post-Platonic Academic physics.[13]

More importantly, the identification of prime matter with οὐσία by Zeno and Chrysippus (Diogenes Laertius 7.150), the criticism of this very position by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* 7.3, and the elusive presence of prime matter in his works suggest that, if the Stoics were aware of the Aristotelian pedigree of ὕλη, they were turning against Aristotle a view considered but refuted by him, because they rejected Aristotelian as much as Platonic Forms and thus thought that prime matter alone could qualify as substance.[14] A sign that this dialectical relationship between Aristotelian and Stoic ontology indeed existed is found in the Stoic doctrine of total blending, which accounts for the relationship between matter and reason. Chrysippus famously argued that, despite appearances, a drop of wine could blend with the entire sea.[15] This case happens to be

10 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 211.17–19 attributes to Antisthenes the example of the horse (which could admittedly also be an Aristotelian contamination).

11 Hahm 1977: 34–48, who also takes into account the Platonic influence.

12 See for example Plutarch, *Against Colotes* 1114 F.

13 Another topic about which Sedley 2002 offers a similar account is the Stoic distinction between πρός τι and πρός τί πως ἔχον (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 166.15–29 = *SVF* 2.403 = *LS* 29 B). For another view, emphasizing the dialectical criticism of Aristotle implied by the Stoic distinction and attributing it to imperial Stoic commentaries of the *Categories* by Athenodorus and Cornutus, see Gourinat 2013.

14 An analogy could be drawn here with the Stoic *corporealist* use of the definition of being put forward in the *Sophist* as a means to refute the sons of the Earth (i.e. corporealism). See Brunschwig 1988.

15 Plutarch, *On the Common Notions against the Stoics* 1078 E (= *LS* 48 B). Sandbach (1985: 33) objects that the example was adapted by Chrysippus from a pun by Arcesilaus, but this pun itself refers to Zeno's doctrine, as argued by Gourinat, forthcoming.

also put forward by Aristotle, but only to be rejected as an impossible mixture.[16] Such a close parallel makes it difficult to think that Zeno and Chrysippus were not aware, one way or another, of the Aristotelian doctrine of mixture. However, it also shows that they were not passively influenced by it. Quite the opposite. They used it dialectically to defend a specifically Stoic view. They may have done the same with prime matter, thus exploiting hesitations or even concessions in Aristotle's hylomorphism to build an original synthesis of corporealism and dualism, since they posited two eternal principles—matter and reason—but held both to be bodies always blended with each other.

These examples show that a good method for assessing the extent of the early Stoic interaction with Aristotle is to start from explicit references to Aristotle or strong textual parallels about a specific doctrine, and use them to substantiate more conjectural hypotheses about *connected* views, while never losing sight of the global philosophical context in which Aristotelian ideas circulated in Hellenistic times. This strategy will prove, I hope, quite fruitful as far as logic and ethics are concerned, but can only be tentative in physics, where direct evidence is almost absent, as we have seen above. Let us consider two other cases, the first conjectural and the second more substantial.

We are told by Cicero that Zeno "didn't accept the addition to the four elements of that fifth nature his predecessors imagined as the source of the senses and the mind."[17] This is not a direct reference to Aristotle, not so much because Aristotle is not named but because Cicero (here drawing on Antiochus) might be the one making the comparison retrospectively between Stoic and Aristotelian cosmology. However, we have good evidence that the hypothesis of the fifth element was known as an Aristotelian doctrine well beyond the boundaries of the Peripatetic school because it was advanced not only in the *On the Heavens* but also in exoteric works such as the lost dialogue *On Philosophy*.

Moreover, this hypothesis is closely connected to the Aristotelian doctrine of the eternity of the world. We happen to know that Panaetius of Rhodes and Boethus of Sidon disagreed with earlier Stoics about the periodic destruction of the world by fire (ἐκπύρωσις) and held the world to be indestructible, thus

16 Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 1.10, 382a23–31.

17 Cicero, *Prior Academics* 39 (trans. Brittain). See also *On Goals* 4.8 where the predecessors are more precisely characterized as the Peripatetics, and the fifth element (together with the nature of the mind) is described as the only non-minor disagreement between them and Zeno.

siding with Aristotle against Zeno.[18] We have here a number of testimonies suggesting an explicit and evolving engagement with Aristotle's views by various Stoics. We can substantiate this point with the help of other testimonies about related views. Zeno and Cleanthes, despite distinguishing between celestial fire and the the fire we know, held that both kinds of fire need nourishment to burn.[19] This is an account of the heavens opposed in almost every respect to Aristotle's. If we add that the first Stoics used Heraclitus as an authority for their cyclical cosmology, that Aristotle discussed such a position (*On the Heavens* 1.10), and that Chrysippus seems to have taken Aristotle's objection into account when stating (against Cleanthes) that the *cosmos* "should not be said to die" (Plutarch, *On the Self-contradictions of the Stoics* 1052 C) during the conflagration,[20] then we can hypothesize *on this topic* an initial strong Heraclitean reaction against Aristotle's position by Zeno and Cleanthes, followed by a careful Chrysippean answer to some of his objections and even, for some later Stoics like Panaetius, a concession that the Stoic doctrine of conflagration was wrong and Aristotle's view the right one.

Another interesting topic of interaction between Aristotle and the Stoics is the specific explanation of natural phenomena, a field in which Aristotle was acknowledged as the undisputed champion in antiquity (Diogenes Laertius 4.32). In his presentation of Stoic theology in the *On the Nature of the Gods*, the character Balbus notes that most of the examples of animal behavior he lists as proof of nature's providential care for "beasts" are taken from Aristotle.[21] This is most probably a remark made by Cicero,[22] but it could also be an echo of the acknowledgement by his Stoic sources of their indebtedness to Aristotle in these matters. Alexander of Aphrodisias indicates that Posidonius followed Aristotle's explanation of the halo, the natural places and movements of the

18 See Philo, *On the Eternity of the World* 76 and Diogenes Laertius 7.142 (= Frr. 65 and 66 Alesse), who do not state that Panaetius changed his views *under the influence of Aristotle*. This is nevertheless plausible given what Philodemus says about Panetius (see footnote 9 above). Still, Plato's authority might have played a role, since, on the Academic interpretation of the *Timaeus*, Plato held the world to be eternal.

19 Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.25, 211.18–25 and Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 2.39–41 (= *SVF* 1.120 and 504) with Hahm 1977: 93–103 and Bénatouïl 2002: 309–314.

20 See Hahm 1977: 184–199. However, his remark that "the Stoics have appropriated Aristotle's theory completely" is wrong, because he thinks Aristotle approves Heraclitus' and Empedocles' position on the eternity of the cosmos (as an anticipation of his own), and he neglects to take into account the differences between the very first Stoics and Chrysippus, whose concession to Aristotle is still minimal.

21 Cicero, *On the Nature of the Gods* 2.125. See Furley 1989 and Tutrone 2006: 82.

22 Cicero, *On Goals* 4.12–13.

four elements, and the relationships between physics and astronomy.[23] These statements clearly suggest a dependency of Posidonius on Aristotle as far as natural philosophy is concerned, but should be read alongside other testimonies showing that Posidonius did not hesitate to criticize Aristotle on other, similar matters such as the delimitation of various zones on the earth (according to climate) or his explanation of the tides in Spain and Morocco.[24]

The Stoicizing geographer Strabo also says in connection with Posidonius that "there is much enquiry into causes in him, that is aristotelizing (τὸ ἀριστοτελίζον), a thing which our school sheers off from because of the concealment of causes" (*Geography* 2.3.8).[25] Strabo cannot be alluding only to the strong interest displayed by Posidonius in matters such as geography, history, astronomy, and natural philosophy in general, about which Aristotle had famously much written, since Strabo is himself a geographer and has just said he will use Posidonius' *On Ocean* when relevant. Rather, Strabo is referring to two types of research found in this treatise, one of which follows a method he deems more Peripatetic than Stoic and calls τὸ αἰτιολογικόν. Either the other type of research is only a description of the phenomena and Strabo is surprisingly casting the Stoics as quasi-sceptics in natural philosophy, or he is alluding to a subtler epistemological difference between Aristotle and the Stoics. Posidonius offered an explanation of tides by the movements of the moon, which is a perfect example of the Stoic doctrine of συμπάθεια, since it puts into evidence a systematic or regular correlation between distant events in the absence of any direct known causal connection between them.[26] Strabo offers a summary of this account in the third book of his *Geography*, and this is probably the kind of analysis he contrasts with the discovery of physical causes of specific events or things, which he deems more typical of Aristotle and more

23 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Meteorologics* 142.21–143.11; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 699.14–700.9, and Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 291.21–292.31 (= Frr. 133, 93a, and 18 Edelstein-Kidd). Posidonius' explanation of thunderstorms and lightning as recorded in Seneca, *Natural Questions* 2, 54.1–55.3 (= Fr. 135 Edelstein-Kidd) is also based on Aristotle's account. The *Natural Questions*, where the influence of Posidonius is strong, happens to be the work by Seneca where the greatest number of references to Aristotle can be found. These are studied in Setaioli 1988: 375–452 and Merckel 2013.

24 Strabo, *Geography* 2.2.2 and 3.3.3 (= Frr. 49 and 220 Edelstein and Kidd). On Posidonius' use of Aristotle in the field of meteorology, see Kidd 1992.

25 Strabo uses ἀριστοτελίζειν twice, here and in the famous story about the library of Aristotle (*Geography* 13.1.54). Hence, Strabo probably thinks that Posidonius contributed to the Aristotelian revival following the diffusion of Aristotle's books by Apellicon of Teos.

26 Strabo, *Geography* 3.5.8 (= F 217 Edelstein Kidd).

uncertain, a difference which would reflect the diverging theories of science and explanation offered by Aristotle and the Stoics.[27]

3 Logic

Stoic logic as a whole, and especially Stoic dialectic, is a very interesting case for the discussion of Aristotle's imprint on Stoicism. For quite some time, Stoic logic was deemed to be very much indebted to Aristotle. Here I am neither referring to Cicero's criticism that the Ancient Academy (meaning in this instance chiefly Aristotle) elaborated a complete "system of deductive argument," of which Chrysippus only refined some aspects too minutely while neglecting others, like rhetoric or the discovery of arguments (*On Goals* 4.8–10), nor to Simplicius' claim that the Stoics borrowed much of their treatment of contraries to a single treatise by Aristotle on this subject.[28] Rather, I have in mind nineteenth-century scholars like Karl Prantl and Edward Zeller, who deemed Stoic logic to be a vain scholastic rehash of Aristotle, innovating only as far as terminology is concerned. As is well-known, this assessment was completely reversed when Jan Łukasiewicz, later followed by Benson Mates, noted the similarities between early twentieth century evolutions in logic and Stoic syllogistic, and defined the latter as a logic of propositions opposed to Aristotle's logic of terms, thus praising Stoic logic as anticipating formal logic. While this reading exaggerated the similarities between the two systems,[29] it drew attention to the consistency and originality of many Stoic dialectical concepts and arguments and vindicated Chrysippus' ancient reputation as the greatest of logicians.

I will not delve into the origins and originality of Stoic syllogistic, which have been much investigated elsewhere.[30] I prefer to start from direct evidence of Stoic knowledge of Aristotle and to show that, despite its scarcity, interesting results can be drawn from it, if we use this evidence as a basis to infer implicit

27 See next section about syllogistics.

28 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 387.17ff. (= *SVF* 1.172) with Sandbach 1985: 20–21. See also Bréhier 1951: 52.

29 Frede 1974 and Gourinat 2000: 9–13.

30 See Gourinat 2000: 245–261, who shows parallels between the forms of several syllogisms attributed to Zeno and Aristotelian syllogisms, and discusses the hypothesis (put forward by Barnes 1985) that Theophrastus' hypothetical syllogisms anticipated Stoic syllogisms.

points of contact.[31] We know, thanks to Plutarch, that Chrysippus acknowledged Aristotle as one of his precessors as far as dialectic was concerned:

> In his third book *Concerning Dialectic* after remarking that dialectic was treated as a subject of serious concern by Plato, Aristotle, and their successors down to Polemo and Strato and especially by Socrates and after exclaiming that one would be willing even to go wrong with so many men of such status as these, he [sc. Chrysippus] continues in so many words: "For, if it had been in passing that they spoke of the matter, one might perhaps have disparaged the subject; but since they have taken such care to speak as if dialectic is among the greatest and most indispensable of capacities, it is not plausible that they, being on the whole such men as we surmise, were so utterly wrong."[32]

This passage could be taken as vindicating Cicero's criticism (based on Antiochus' ideas) of Stoic dialectic as a mere development of Academic dialectic. The reference to dialectical studies as a possible mistake implies, however, that Chrysippus is opposing arguments blaming dialectic for being false or useless. Such an attack might originate from several corners of the Hellenistic philosophical arena: the Garden, the New Academy, and the Stoa itself with Ariston of Chios.[33] Chrysippus' appeal to his predecessors seems intended to appropriate the Socratic and Academic legacy as far as dialectic is concerned and would be most effective against the New Academy. In this context, Aristotle is just one name among others, and the word "dialectic" is clearly taken here in its largest sense, covering any method of reasoning through questions and answers (as suggested again by the reference to Socrates), and not in the Aristotelian sense, which downgraded dialectic to one specific method of discussion, based on *endoxa* (*Sophistical Refutations* 2, 165a38).

However, Jacques Brunschwig has drawn attention to a book-title by Chrysippus: *On the Fact That the Ancients Admitted Dialectic Along With Demonstrations*.[34] This title, along with other features of the incomplete list of Chrysippus' books preserved by Diogenes Laertius, suggests that Chrysippus appealed to past philosophers to defend dialectic, but also that he conceded

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31 See also Barnes 1999.

32 Plutarch, *On the Self-contraditions of the Stoics* 1045 F–1046 A. Trans. Cherniss modified (= *SVF* 2.126). See Barnes 1999: 32–36.

33 See Sandbach 1985: 70; Brunschwig 1991: 83 and 87; Barnes 1999: 32.

34 Brunschwig 1991. The Greek title (as reported in Diogenes Laertius 7.201) is Περὶ τοῦ ἐγκρίνειν τοὺς ἀρχαίους τὴν διαλεκτικὴν σὺν ταῖς ἀποδείξεσι.

the superiority of demonstration to dialectic. This recalls the distinction put forward by Aristotle at the beginning of the *Topics* and the *Prior Analytics*. Since dialectic and rhetoric were the main subdivisions of Stoic logic (Diogenes Laertius 7.41), and given that some Stoics even borrowed Aristotle's description (*Rhetoric* 1.1, 1354a1) of dialectic and rhetoric as "counterparts" of one another,[35] the whole Stoic demarcation of dialectic could have been inspired by Aristotle.

Aristotle's notion of dialectic and, hence, Brunschwig's interpretation seem however incompatible with the Stoic definition of dialectic as a "science of what is true, false, and neither" (Posidonius), or "of what signifies and what is signified" (Chrysippus) (Diogenes Laertius 7.62), and as a virtue of the sage.[36] While the book-title implies a distinction between dialectic and demonstration similar to Aristotle's, either Chrysippus did not agree with it[37] or he did not agree with the consequences Aristotle drew from it as to the epistemological limits of dialectic. This could be inferred from a surprising reference to Aristotle in *PHerc* 1020, a fragment about dialectic and the wise man, which is attributed to Chrysippus:

> a consequence of this, in most cases, is that wise men are unerring and faultless (to use Aristotle's words), and do everything well: for this reason a great deal of attention is given to assent, in order that it should not occur but in connection with an apprehension.[38]

Paolo Crivelli has pointed out that the word ἀνεξαπατήτος appears at *Topics* 6.4, 132a31 in an argument proving that someone knowledgeable is not *unerring* because geometers can err as far as some reasoning is concerned. The word ἀναμαρτήτος is used at *Politics* 6.4, 1319a3, where Aristotle holds good men to be faultless. Chrysippus' quotation could also refer to another work unknown to us where these words were used together. What is relevant here, however, is that Chrysippus mentions Aristotle again on dialectical matters, but in order to argue for the specifically Stoic claim that dialectical virtue makes the wise

35 Sopater, *On Hermogenes' On Stasis*, in *Rhetores Graeci* 5.15.15–16 Walz.

36 See Gourinat 2000: 12–13, 69–83.

37 Brunschwig 1991: 87 concedes that Chrysippus might have taken as similar Plato's and Aristotle's distinctions between dialectic on the one hand and demonstration or mathematics on the other, as suggested by the passage where he mentions them together as devoting themselves to dialectic. If this is true, then Chrysippus' treatise could refer to a distinction putting dialectic *above* demonstration, as Plato does in the *Republic*.

38 *PHerc* 1020, col. 1 (= *FDS* 88–90 Hülser). Trans. Crivelli 2007: 26, who relies here on Arnim's reconstruction of the text in *SVF* 2.131.

man immune to any mistake and thus superior to a geometer or any one who is knowledgeable. This is reminiscent of Plato's rather than Aristotle's dialectic.

Still, the Stoics could concur with Aristotle on a number of features or uses of dialectic. In a sense, the Stoics agreed that dialectic, especially in ethical topics (to which Chrysippus' treatise was devoted according to its location in the list of works reported by Diogenes Laertius) takes authoritative opinions, which they call "notions" (ἔννοια), as its subject matter. However, they deem some of them to be natural and shared by all men, thus granting them an epistemological reliability which reputable opinions (ἔνδοξα) lack according to Aristotle.

The problem of the starting-point of knowledge is indeed another similarity between Aristotle and the Stoics. As acknowledged even by Sandbach (1985: 51–52), Aristotle's description of the genesis of universals from sensations in *Metaphysics* 1.1 and *Posterior Analytics* 2.19 is echoed in the Stoic doctrine of preconceptions (πρόληψις).[39] Some scholars have also supposed that the Stoic notion of representation (φαντασία) might have been inspired by *On the Soul* 3.3, because both Aristotle and Chrysippus say that φαντασία takes its name from light. But the differences between the two doctrines are very important,[40] if only because Stoic "representations" account for all the receptive capacities of the soul: they can have sensory as well as non-sensory objects (Diogenes Laertius 7.51) and are partly passive affections of the soul and partly the effect of an activity of its ruling part.

4 Ethics

Ethics is both where there is the most evidence about interactions between Stoicism and Aristotle and where ancient debates interfere the most with its interpretation. Several scholars have tried to substantiate two of Cicero's central points about Stoic ethics famously made in *On Goals* 3–5: (a) that the Stoic attempt to derive the supreme good from the first human natural impulses, known as the doctrine of "appropriation" (οἰκείωσις), was inspired by a similar

39 Frede 1994: 52–55; Scott 1995: 107–118. While dialectic is chiefly used to articulate these preconceptions into a system, Chrysippus also accepts its use, albeit with caution, in the refutation of rival positions. Plutarch, *On the Self-contradictions of the Stoics* 1035 F (= *SVF* 2.127 = *LS* 31 P) is reminiscent of Aristotle: see Gourinat 2000: 85–87 and Bénatouïl 2006: 81–85.

40 See Sandbach 1985: 21–23.

earlier Academic or Peripatetic (Theophrastean) doctrine,[41] and (b) that the Stoic conception of the relationship between virtue, natural things, and happiness is best understood against the background of Aristotle's doctrine, seen either as its model (according to the character Cicero) or as its main target (according to Cato). I prefer to leave aside these two lines of interpretation. I agree with many recent studies that the first point is misguided and that, whatever its sources are, the Stoic doctrine of appropriation is quite distinctive.[42] The second point is quite illuminating, but it has been amply developed at the expense of other interactions between early Peripatetic and Stoic ethics, for which we have more evidence.[43]

The one quotation which proves beyond doubt that Chrysippus did know and discuss some Aristotelian texts is by Plutarch and concerns the value of pleasure:

> When writing against Aristotle concerning justice he declares him to be wrong in asserting that, if pleasure is a goal (τέλος), justice is annulled and along with justice each of the other virtues also. This is wrong according to him because, while justice is in truth annulled by them (who so treat pleasure), nothing prevents the other virtues from existing since they would at any rate be good and approved even though not *per se* objects of choice; and then he gives each of them by name.[44]

Editors of Aristotle's fragments assigned the passage criticized by Chrysippus either to *On Justice* or to the *Exhortation to Philosophy* [*Protrepticus*]. What is surprising is that Chrysippus here *objects* to a Stoic-sounding argument put forward by Aristotle about the incompatibility of pleasure and virtues and about the interdependence of justice and the other virtues. He probably also attacked Aristotle (as he did Plato)[45] for his holding other things than virtue to be good.[46] In this text, however, Chrysippus makes essentially a logical point that must be read against the background of Chrysippus' discussion

41 See for example Dirlmeier 1937 and Radice 2000.

42 Pohlenz 1940: 1–47; White 1979, Fortenbaugh 1983; Long 1998: 371–375; Gill 2006: 167–173.

43 Long 1968: 74–76, Irwin 1998, Annas 1993, Nielsen 2012.

44 Plutarch, *On the Self-contradictions of the Stoics* 1040 E. Trans. Cherniss.

45 See Plutarch, *On the Self-contradictions of the Stoics* 1040 D.

46 Gourinat, forthcoming, rightly suggests that the anecdote told by Zeno (Stobaeus, *Anthology* 95.21 = *SVF* 1.273) about Crates reading the *Protrepticus* is an attack against Aristotle's ethics, since Crates tells a shoemaker that he is better equipped to philosophize than the king Aristotle dedicated his work to.

of possible definitions of the *telos*,[47] aimed at showing that all positions but the Stoic one boil down to hedonism.[48] Still, by insisting against Aristotle that holding pleasure to be a goal would not threaten the virtues other than justice because they could still be valued as means to pleasure, Chrysippus seems to grant some consistency to Epicurus' instrumental conception of the virtues (with the exception of justice). He thus both acknowledges that hedonism can hold other things than pleasure to be good *and* that the defense of *justice* is the crucial test which all non-Stoic definitions of the good fail (Cicero, *Prior Academics* 2.140). This seems like a refinement (typical of Chrysippus) of Cleanthes' claim that "if pleasure is the goal, wisdom (φρόνησις) has been given to men for [acting] badly."[49]

Two other testimonies suggest that Aristotle was an interlocutor of the early Stoics on the topic of pleasure.[50] First, the Stoic conception of pleasure as "a byproduct (ἐπιγέννημα) which arises only when nature all by itself has searched out and adopted the proper requirements for a creature's constitution,"[51] is mentioned by Diogenes Laertius in the context of an argument against the Epicurean view that pleasure is "the object of animals' first impulse." It recalls Aristotle's famous definition of pleasure as a "supervening

47 See Cicero, *Prior Academics* 138–140. The six views discussed in this passage are anonymous but attributed to various authors in *Prior Academics* 131, one of whom is posterior to Chrysippus. "Aristotle and his friends" are tentatively lumped together with Polemo and the Ancient Academia as holding that the end is "to live honorably while enjoying the primary objects nature recommends to human beings" (this is Antiochus' reading of Aristotle, and nothing suggests it was shared by Chrysippus), but another Peripatetic, Hieronymus, is credited with the view that the end is freedom from any pain: this might explain why Chrysippus locked horns with the *Peripatos* about pleasure and its covert advocacy.

48 Note that this *chrysippea divisio* was answered by Carneades with his own rival *divisio* of all possible definitions of the end, which was the basis of his claim that Stoicism differed only verbally from Aristotle's position (Cicero, *On Goals* 5.17–20). About both divisions, see Lévy 1992: 337–418, and Algra 1997.

49 Stobaeus, *Anthology* 1.6.66 (= *SVF* 1.556). Cicero, *On Goals* 2.69 (= *SVF* 1.553) explains that Cleanthes used to describe the virtues as slaves to pleasure.

50 As far as later Stoics are concerned, one should mention Seneca's *On the Happy Life* 15. After refuting an Epicurean position, Seneca deals with a less radical position which offers to combine virtue and pleasure and which has been shown (Grimal 1967) to be based on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Seneca's arguments show that virtue is destroyed by associating with pleasure, thus echoing Cleanthes (see previous note) and Chrysippus.

51 Diogenes Laertius 7.86 (= LS 57 A. Trans. Long and Sedley).

perfection" (ἐπιγινόμενόν τι τέλος).[52] Second, a fragment transmitted by Plutarch includes another more probable, albeit polemical, allusion to Aristotle and Theophrastus:

> Chrysippus himself, at least in his fourth book on *Ways of Life*, thinks that the scholastic life (τὸν σχολαστικὸν βίον) is no different from the life of pleasure: "all who suppose that the scholastic life is especially incumbent upon philosophers seem to me to make a serious mistake from the beginning by presuming that one should engage in this as a way of passing time (διαγωγῆς) or for some other similar purpose and drag out one's whole life in some such fashion—which if accurately examined, means "pleasantly," for we ought not to miss the underlying meaning, since many make this assertion openly and not a few more obscurely."[53]

The expressions "σχολαστικὸς βίος" and "διαγωγή" were used by Aristotle and Theophrastus in their description of the intellectual life of the philosopher as the best life.[54] This makes them the most probable target of Chrysippus. Again using his "all or nothing at all" division of ends, Chrysippus claimed that the Peripatetic advocacy of the contemplative life was a more or less disguised form of hedonism. Chrysippus perhaps appealed to Aristotle's own characterization of the theoretical life as the most pleasurable and thus countered his objections to the life guided by the practical virtues (*Nicomachean Ethics* 10.7).

As a matter of fact, while we have no proof that the Stoics knew and discussed the Aristotelian concept of virtue, this concept is one of the few topics on which they can be understood as answering objections made by Aristotle to Socrates, Plato, and the Academics.[55] Aristotle famously objects to conceptions of happiness based on the possession of science or virtue because they neglect the *use* of science or virtue in actions.[56] Zeno was a pupil of Polemo, and the Stoics thought of themselves as Socratics and they thus defended the

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52 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.4, 4.1174b31. See Long 1968: 80. Sandbach 1985: 27–28 offers unconvincing objections.

53 Plutarch, *On the Common Notions against the Stoics* 1033 C–D (trans. Cherniss modified). On this fragment, see Bénatouïl 2007: 2–6.

54 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.7, 1177b21–22, and 1177a27. Cf. Diogenes Laertius 5.37.

55 In the following paragraph, I summarize Bénatouïl 2006: 148–155. See Alesse 2000: 233–264 regarding Stoic answers to Aristotelian objections against Socrates on virtue.

56 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.9, 1098b 30: the definition of happiness by the mere possession of virtue allows the good life to be spent sleeping. Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* 8.1, 1246a31: one can make a bad use of science, hence virtue is not a science.

Socratic definition of virtue as a science against Aristotle's objections,[57] as testified by Cicero:

> While his predecessors claimed that not every virtue belonged to reason, but that some were brought to perfection through natural dispositions and habit, [Zeno] considered all of them to be rational. While they thought that the non-rational kinds of virtue I just mentioned were separable, he argued, first, that this was quite impossible, second that what was intrinsically excellent wasn't just the use of the virtues, as his predecessors had claimed, but the disposition itself; and third, that all the same no one actually had virtue without using it continually (*Posterior Academics* 38. Trans. Brittain, slightly modified).[58]

Aristotle sometimes puts forward drunkenness and madness as circumstances preventing someone who has knowledge from *using* it,[59] and Cleanthes and Chrysippus engaged in a debate about precisely these circumstances and their effects on virtue. Following Antisthenes, who held that virtue could not be lost, Cleanthes insisted that the mental strength required by virtue made the wise person immune to any attack, whereas Chrysippus thought virtue could be temporarily suspended by physical causes (such as an excess of wine or melancholy) but only inasmuch as they paralyze reason itself and any disposition which depends on it, including virtue.[60]

There is a fourth ethical divergence between Zeno and the ancients listed by Cicero, which is probably the best known. It concerns the value and nature of emotions, which Zeno held to be morbid and to have judgment rather than non-rational desire as their source (*Posterior Academics* 39). While we do not have evidence of a discussion of Aristotle's position on the topic of the emotions by early Stoics, we have seen that such a discussion may have existed

57 The use of virtue is duly mentioned in Hellenistic definitions of happiness ascribed to Aristotle (Diogenes Laertius 5.30; Cicero, *On Goals* 2.19) and was thus probably known to the Stoics whether or not they had access to the *Nicomachean* or *Eudemian Ethics*.

58 This text reports Antiochus' description of Zeno's corrections to the ethical doctrine of the Ancient Academy (which is, in this instance, very close from Aristotle's). While it might be a retrospective reconstruction by Antiochus, especially as far as the position of the Ancient Academy is concerned, it is more reliable than testimonies about Zeno's borrowings, as it reports a precise *difference* between Stoicism and previous doctrines, which can be confirmed by other testimonies.

59 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.5, 1147a10ff.

60 See Diogenes Laertius 7.127–128. Chrysippus thus agrees with Aristotle, *Physics* 7.3, 247b14–15. For more details, see Bénatouïl 2006: 163–169.

on the topic of pleasure, which the Stoics classified as a passion. Moreover, we know that Antipater of Tarsus criticized the Peripatetics in his treatise *On Anger* because they held anger to be useful when fighting against wild animals or enemies.[61] This ancient debate is at the center of Seneca's *On Anger*, our best source about the Stoic attack on μετριοπάθεια, a position they assigned to Aristotle and his followers.[62] The connection of this debate with the one about the definition of passion and the division of the soul might suggest that Aristotle influenced those Stoics who qualified or criticized Chrysippus' intellectualist account of passions, namely Posidonius and, according to some scholars only, Panaetius.[63] Note however that, whereas Galen testifies to Posidonius quoting and praising Plato in matters of moral psychology (*On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* V 421 K = 284.33–286.7 De Lacy = F 150a Edelstein-Kidd), it is uncertain whether Posidonius himself acknowledged agreeing with Aristotle: in many instances, it seems that Galen might be the one comparing Posidonius to Aristotle. In particular, he claims they agree "that there are three faculties (δυνάμεις) of the soul, with which we desire, are angry, and think", but this can be disputed.[64]

As a matter of fact, for a number of scholars, it is Stoic moral psychology from Zeno onward and its central notions of representation (φαντασία) and impulse (ὁρμή), which bear the mark of Aristotle's explanations of action in *On the Soul* 3, *The Movement of Animals* and *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.[65] Still, Stoicism also rejects some of Aristotle's fundamental assumptions, like the existence of non-rational powers in the soul, since it holds that our beliefs account entirely for our behavior. Zeno and his followers thus probably tried to answer Aristotle's objections to Socrates' intellectualism, sometimes by using and distorting Aristotelian concepts.[66] This paradox is well-illustrated by Epictetus' ethics, which emphasizes "choice" (προαίρεσις) and the fact that it is "up to us" (ἐφ' ἡμῖν) in a vocabulary strikingly reminiscent of Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* 3.5), but with a philosophical intent which is completely alien, if not downright opposed, to Aristotle, since Epictetus upholds Chrysippean

61 Philodemus, *On Anger PHerc.* 182 col. 33.33–40. Cf. Seneca, *Letters* 116.1.

62 See Setaioli 1988: 141–152 and Fillon-Lahille 1984: 203–220.

63 Alesse 1994 reads Panaetius as influenced by Plato and Aristotle about the parts of the soul and the nature of virtue, and is criticized convincingly by Prost 2001 and Tieleman 2007: 120–130.

64 Galen, *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* V 454–455 K (= 312.29–34 De Lacy = F 142 Edelstein-Kidd) and Tieleman 2003: 198–206.

65 Long 1968: 81; Preus 1981; Inwood 1985, who offers a detailed comparison between Aristotelian and Stoic moral psychology; Sakezles 1998.

66 Alesse 2000: 249–256.

intellectualism (unlike Posidonius) and restricts our freedom to our decisions and psychological reactions to events, leaving aside their effects in the world.[67] This surprising dialectical strategy often underlies lexical or conceptual parallels between Aristotle and Stoicism, as we observed several times in this chapter about physics, logic or ethics.

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67 See Dobbin 1991; Gourinat 2005; Frede 2011, chapters 2 and 4. I am inclined to think that Epictetus did not need to read *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.5 in order to use προαίρεσις as a crucial term to describe human action (since the term is frequent in historical works) and characterize it as "up to us."

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PART 2

The Post-Hellenistic Engagement with Aristotle

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The Peripatetic Tradition

CHAPTER 4

Andronicus of Rhodes and the Construction of the Aristotelian Corpus

Myrto Hatzimichali

1 Introduction

In the long and complicated history of the transmission of classical texts from their authors to our mediaeval manuscripts, the case of the Aristotelian corpus is highly peculiar and has commanded scholarly attention for generations. One remarkable fact is that the works Aristotle himself published (that is, works he wrote with care and with a view to wider circulation) have been lost, and we possess instead what are generally agreed by scholars to be his lecture notes, or at any rate highly technical treatises produced for consumption within the more exclusive circle of his school.[1] The published dialogues were known to Cicero, who says that his own dialogues were composed *more Aristotelio* (*Letters to his Friends* 1.9), and it is presumably Aristotelian dialogues that Cicero alludes to when he says that Aristotle will come "pouring forth a golden stream of eloquence" (*Prior Academics* 119), because we do not find anything of the sort in the surviving works.

Moreover, any inquiry into the fate of the Aristotelian corpus has to contend with the notorious ancient tale that speaks very explicitly about exceptional circumstances of loss, rediscovery, and survival that make Aristotle's case stand out among ancient authors. Strabo (*Geography* 13.1.54) informs us that after the death of Theophrastus all of his and Aristotle's books were bequeathed to Neleus, who took them to his home town of Scepsis in the Troad, where his descendants kept them hidden from the book-thirsty Attalid kings. They made up their minds to sell the books eventually in the early first century BC, but to the rich bibliophile Apellicon of Teos, whose library was brought by Sulla to Rome and received some form of scholarly attention from the grammarian Tyrannio, who then passed them on to Andronicus of Rhodes (the latter's involvement is only mentioned by Plutarch, *Life of Sulla* 26).

Hardly any scholars nowadays trust this story in its entirety, but it cannot be completely ignored either. The present chapter will be an effort to trace

1 Barnes 1995: 12–15.

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some of the steps in the complicated history of the Aristotelian corpus, with particular emphasis on the role of Andronicus of Rhodes. We shall be asking what happened in the first century BC that led Strabo to speak of a rediscovery of Aristotle's writings with an impact on Peripatetic philosophizing; and we shall also be looking for factors that could have contributed to the published dialogues' falling out of circulation. For a long time it was traditional to speak of a "Roman edition" of Aristotle, prepared by Andronicus of Rhodes, and often credited with being a canonical or standard edition. But Jonathan Barnes in his "Roman Aristotle"[2] reminded us quite emphatically that no ancient source speaks of such a respected reliable edition, nor is Andronicus held in any esteem anywhere as a textual critic. So it is important to make a distinction between two different and separable types of activity, namely textual criticism on the one hand and canon- or corpus-organization on the other. A modern edition of an author's entire oeuvre normally involves both activities, and this can lead to the term "edition" being used for either one when speaking of ancient "editors," which does not help with ascertaining what it was they actually did. In fact, as Tiziano Dorandi has shown very convincingly,[3] Porphyry is the only individual that we can safely speak of as a full-blown ancient editor of a philosophical corpus, because we know that he dealt with both aspects of Plotinus' text, namely ordering (διάταξις) and correction (διόρθωσις) (*Life of Plotinus* 24). As we shall see, Andronicus can only be credited with the former activity, that of canon- or corpus-organization, and in that respect he was very successful and influential indeed.

2 Aristotle in the Hellenistic Period

The most extraordinary claim made in Strabo's story is that Aristotle's books were unavailable to the Peripatetics after Theophrastus and this compromised the level of their philosophizing. This is significant for Andronicus because of the possible implication that he brought long-lost works back into circulation. However, there is no reason for thinking that the books taken to Scepsis by Neleus were the only copies in existence, and there is evidence for some works being known to Peripatetics and others after Theophrastus' death.[4]

2 Barnes 1997.

3 Dorandi 2010.

4 Barnes 1997: 12–16; Sharples 2010: 28–29. See also Pajón Leyra 2013 for arguments for the use of Aristotelian texts, especially the *Meteorology*, by Posidonius on Rhodes before the period 101–91 BC.

David Hahm recently made a case for a biased motivation behind Strabo's remarks, namely that they were intended to belittle the performative practice of philosophical debating that the Hellenistic Peripatetics (especially the circle of Critolaus) engaged in, and promote the "new methodology of private textual exegesis."[5] On the other hand, Oliver Primavesi showed that several Aristotelian texts may well have been out of circulation during the Hellenistic period. His grounds was that the texts in our manuscript tradition retain the pre-Hellenistic system of book numbering by means of twenty-four plain letters rather than twenty-seven letter-numerals,[6] which suggests that they did not pass through the Hellenistic editorial and library-organizational processes. This feature, combined with the absence from the Hellenistic catalogue of Aristotle's works preserved by Diogenes Laertius (5.22–27) of many titles known to us, suggests for Primavesi that the Aristotelian treatises not listed by Diogenes were inaccessible until the first century BC.[7]

The question of precisely which Aristotelian texts were available in the Hellenistic period, and where, can never be settled with full certainty, especially since availability does not imply easy access, interest, and use. Moreover, our evidence suggests that different transmission histories apply to different texts, depending on the interests of readers at various parts of the Hellenistic world.[8] For example, while Aristotle's biology was neglected in philosophical circles, scholars working in the library of Alexandria made use of it when interpreting Homer's references to the animal world. Moreover, Aristophanes of Byzantium (librarian in the early second century BC) produced an epitome of Aristotle's biology which indicates that he found the treatises in a form very close to that in which they came down to us, because he explicitly sets himself the task of re-arranging the material from Aristotle's original organization by differentiae into an arrangement by animal species.[9]

The catalogue preserved in Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Aristotle* provides a valuable snapshot of the state of the Aristotelian corpus in the Hellenistic period. In this catalogue, fewer than ten out of more than one hundred entries can be safely said to correspond to surviving works, with a further fifteen or so

5 Hahm 2007: 97–101.

6 Thus, for example, the sixth book of the *Physics* is Z rather than Ϛ (cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 923.3–7); the eleventh book of the *Metaphysics* (excluding *Alpha Elatton*) is Λ rather than ια′.

7 Primavesi 2007, especially 58–70.

8 Cf. Pajón Leyra 2013: 732–733.

9 The surviving extracts of the epitome are edited in Lambros 1885. See especially 36.3–5 Lambros, with Cerami and Falcon 2014: 39–41.

partial identifications. Thirty-nine titles point to otherwise unknown works, while seventy-three titles are cited elsewhere but do not form part of our surviving corpus. Diogenes' list need not be treated as a mere library catalogue because it could be listing all the works its composer knew of, regardless of whether copies were physically present in a particular library.[10] In several aspects, the list corresponds to the doxography that follows it (5.28–34).[11] Both the catalogue and the doxography's account of logic ignore the *Categories* and the treatise *On Interpretation* (the titles appear at 5.26 in what is clearly an interpolation), while the doxography ascribes the content of the treatise *On Interpretation* to the *Prior Analytics* and in turn that of the *Prior Analytics* to the *Posterior* (5.29).[12] The doxography dwells on logic (which is explicitly referred to as the "instrument," *organon*, of philosophy) and its "persuasive" aspect, and mentions works pertaining to "discovery" and "utility" such as the numerous collections of premises and the *Methodics*, as well as works on eristic, question-and-answer and sophistical refutations—all of which correspond to a number of entries in the catalogue, cf. 5.29 with 5.23). In ethics, it presents a view of the *telos* very close to that of Critolaus ("happiness is a completion made up of three types of goods," cf. Stobaeus, *Selections* 2.7, 46.10–15). In physics, the doxography emphasizes Aristotle's pursuit of causes, but limits itself to remarks on god's incorporeality and the fifth element; this limited scope corresponds to the absence of many physical works from the catalogue.[13] On the whole, both the doxography and the catalogue paint a picture of the Aristotelian corpus and Aristotelian philosophy that is alien to the one emerging from the reading of the surviving works. There are reasons for thinking that the radical transformation began in the first century BC and was greatly impacted by the activity of Andronicus of Rhodes.

10 Callimachus' *Pinakes* probably followed the same principle. Cf. *Suda*, s.v. "Callimachus" (κ 227).

11 This is not to suggest that the catalogue and the doxography go back to the same source. On the doxography preserved in Diogenes Laertius, see chapter 14 (The Ancient Biographical Tradition on Aristotle).

12 It appears that the *Analytics* suffered especially from a proliferation of pseudepigrapha: Diogenes' list (no. 49) mentions nine books of *Prior Analytics* and later commentators say that forty books of *Analytics* were found in the library of Alexandria, of which only four were genuine. See Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 7.26–29.

13 For the doxography see Sharples 2010: 33–34, with further references.

3 Andronicus of Rhodes: The Sources

Our sources are unanimous on Andronicus' provenance from the island of Rhodes and on his affiliation as a Peripatetic. This is all the biographical information that can be extracted with any certainty. We are otherwise in the dark, especially with respect to his precise date and place of work. Philoponus (*On Aristotle's Categories* 5.16–19) states that Andronicus was the teacher of Boethus of Sidon, who in turn taught or studied together with Strabo (*Geography* 16.2.24).[14] This would place Andronicus' activity anywhere from the seventies to the forties BC, depending on how we interpret Strabo's statement on Boethus of Sidon and on what we take to be a normal teacher-pupil age gap. As a result, different considerations have been used to date Andronicus' publication of the Aristotelian corpus with a systematic catalogue. Jonathan Barnes dates it after Cicero's death in 44 BC, on the grounds that Cicero appears to be unaware of it, while Paul Moraux and Hans Gottschalk argued for earlier dates.[15] Similarly, it is not clear whether Andronicus' activity should be placed in Rome (where the books to which he gained access via Tyrannio were located) or in Athens (where one would expect the leading Peripatetic to be based).[16] Before turning to focus on Andronicus' contribution to the construction of the Aristotelian corpus, we should refer briefly to his other output, which included important exegetical work on the *Categories* as well as a paraphrase of that work (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 26.17–20) and a work *On Division* mentioned in the proem of Boethius' *On Division*. A work *On Affections* was also ascribed to Andronicus but is in all probability spurious.[17]

Andronicus is absent from Strabo's story on the rediscovery of Aristotle's books, in what has been thought a strange omission or even a textual corruption.[18] Strabo did know of Andronicus, as an important Peripatetic teacher no less (*Geography* 14.2.13), but his digression from the natives of Scepsis ends with a general lament about the state of the book trade in Rome and Alexandria. His emphasis throughout is on the unfortunate fate of the books, so perhaps we should not be surprised that he does not mention here any constructive work done on them. He also omits any detail on the grammarian Tyrannio's

14 Strabo's term συνεφιλοσοφήσαμεν ("we philosophized together") could mean either.

15 Barnes 1997: 21–23; Moraux 1973: 45–58; Gottschalk 1987: 1095–1096.

16 There is a report that Andronicus became the eleventh scholarch of the Peripatos. Cf. Ammonius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 5.28–29. On these issues, see Griffin 2015: 27–29.

17 Griffin 2015: 229–232.

18 Cf. Barnes 1997: 19–20.

involvement, simply stating that he "handled" the books.[19] For more details, and for the introduction of Andronicus, we must turn to Plutarch's *Life of Sulla*:

> It is said that when this library came to Rome Tyrannio the grammarian arranged (ἐνσκευάσασθαι) most things, and Andronicus of Rhodes through him got access to the copies, made them public (lit. "placed them in the middle," εἰς μέσον θεῖναι), and prepared the lists (πίνακες) that are now in circulation (Plutarch, *Life of Sulla* 26).

Based on Cicero's evidence on the work done by Tyrannio in his own library, we can gather that the grammarian must have improved the physical state of the manuscripts by gluing together loose pieces of papyrus and adding labels.[20] This does not suggest in any way an "edition" by Tyrannio; on the contrary, his activity is presented by our sources as distinctly non-public. Apart from his conservation role, Tyrannio also acted as an intermediary, making the texts available to Andronicus, who is credited by Plutarch with making the results of Tyrannio's work public. It is worth pausing for a moment to reflect on the process of making a book public in an ancient context. We must always be careful not to think in terms of modern editions of texts—even the word "publication" presupposes the institutional acceptance and technical infrastructure of a publisher, which is not applicable in an ancient context. "Making public" in antiquity meant relinquishing sole possession of something, and with books this could take place through sending a copy to a dedicatee; placing a text somewhere where it could be read or copied;[21] or through a public reading.[22]

Plutarch provides no details at all on the nature of Andronicus' work on the Aristotelian corpus. We only learn that he published the results of Tyrannio's work (in one of the ways just described), and that he produced the *pinakes*

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19 Even Tyrannio's role can be placed in a bad light if we interpret Strabo's θεραπεύσας (referring to Tyrannio's relationship with Sulla's librarian) as "cultivating" (Gottschalk 1987: 1084) or "having buttered up" (Barnes 1997: 3). But it could mean simply "being in the service of."

20 Cicero, *To Atticus* 4.4a: "You will find that Tyrannio has made a wonderfully good arrangement of my books. [. . .] Still, I wish you would send me a couple of your library slaves for Tyrannio to employ as gluers, and in other subordinate work, and tell them to get some fine parchment to make title-pieces, which you Greeks, I think, call '*sillyboi*'." Cf. 4.8.2.

21 Cf. Diogenes Laertius 3.66: "if someone wished to read through [Plato's books], which had just been made public (νεωστὶ ἐκδοθέντα), they would pay a fee to the owners."

22 Cf. Diogenes Laertius 5.73, from the will of Lyco the Peripatetic: "I leave [to Chares] two minae and my published/read (ἀνεγνωσμένα) books. The unpublished ones (ἀνέκδοτα) I leave to Callinus, so that he may publish them with care."

(catalogue) that were current in Plutarch's time. This probably means that Plutarch knew of other *pinakes* that were superseded by Andronicus' work, presenting the Aristotelian corpus in a different shape from what became the norm by the late first century AD, perhaps something like the list in Diogenes. Andronicus' catalogue is crucial for any assessment of his contribution to the construction of the Aristotelian corpus, because it was only through a catalogue that one could possibly put together a corpus in antiquity: the full texts of any author as productive as Aristotle would occupy hundreds of disparate papyrus rolls, needing a self-standing catalogue to specify their order. We must, therefore, interrogate our sources for any evidence on the content and rationale of the *pinakes* and the work that contained them, starting with Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus*:

> Plotinus himself entrusted me with the task of arranging (διάταξις) and correcting (διόρθωσις) his books. [...] I judged that I should not leave the books in the chronological order in which they had confusingly been published, but I should imitate Apollodorus of Athens and Andronicus the Peripatetic, the former of whom collected Epicharmus the comic poet into ten volumes while the latter divided the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus into treatises (πραγματείας), collecting related material (οἰκείας ὑποθέσεις) into the same place. And so I divided the fifty-four books of Plotinus I possessed into six enneads [...]; and in each ennead I united the related texts, putting first in order the lighter subjects (Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 24, trans. Barnes 1997: 37).

In this passage, Porphyry compares the arrangement activities of three individuals: Apollodorus of Athens, Andronicus, and himself. Apollodorus' main job must have been to clarify what should and what should not be included in Epicharmus' output, since the problem of comedies incorrectly attributed to Epicharmus was pressing already in antiquity (cf. Athenaeus 14.648 D).[23] Andronicus is especially credited with grouping together works on related subjects, thus dividing Aristotle's and Theophrastus' works into treatises (πραγματεῖαι). Is then Porphyry crediting Andronicus with the creation of the treatises as we have them out of what were previously separate disorganized pamphlets by pulling together, say, the different books of the *Physics*, the *Topics*, or the *Metaphysics*? Jonathan Barnes showed that Porphyry's text offers

23 POxy XXV 2426 preserves a catalogue if Epicharmus' works in trimeters, which very likely goes back to Apollodorus.

no explicit justification for such a claim,[24] but did not address directly the crucial question of what sort of entity is meant by Porphyry's term πραγματεῖαι. Porphyry treats this unit as parallel to his own enneads when he says that Andronicus divided Aristotle's works into πραγματεῖαι, just as he himself divided Plotinus' into six enneads, which would point to groups of self-contained but thematically related works. Elsewhere he uses the term to refer both to treatises as we understand them, such as the *Metaphysics* (*Life of Plotinus* 14.7) or the *Categories* (*On Aristotle's Categories* 57.5), as well as more generally to the treatment of particular subjects (*Isagoge* 1.13; cf. *Life of Pythagoras* 48.1). The kinds of subjects or "related material" that Porphyry goes on to mention with respect to his own groupings are ethics, physics and cosmology, soul, *nous* and forms, and finally metaphysics. Therefore, even though we cannot extract from Porphyry that the units into which Andronicus divided the Aristotelian corpus are the treatises now familiar to us, we can take away at the very least that he grouped individual works according to subject-matter (ethics, physics, soul etc.), thus placing them into some sort of systematic order. This order was lacking before Andronicus, Porphyry suggests, as in the case of Plotinus before his own intervention, where the books were published in a confusing (φύρδην) chronological order.

For further evidence on the order imposed by Andronicus on the Aristotelian corpus we may turn to a source that claims to draw on him, namely the Arabic translation of a work by a certain Ptolemy.[25] The Arabic sources refer to Ptolemy "al-Ġarīb," "the unknown," probably confusing his name, Χέννος, with ξένος, "stranger." Ptolemy Chennos was an Alexandrian polymath active in the time of Nero, and the dedication of his work to a certain Gallus may indicate Rome as his place of activity.[26] Ptolemy's work was also (indirectly?) known to the commentator Elias (who mistook him for Ptolemy Philadelphus). Elias attributes the claim that there were 1,000 books by Aristotle both to Ptolemy (*On Aristotle's Categories* 107.11–14) and to Andronicus (*On Aristotle's Categories* 113.17–19)—and it is also found in the Arabic text (Hein 1985: 419). Elias is again in agreement with the Arabic sources in listing a collection of Aristotelian letters put together by Artemon in eight books (*On Aristotle's Categories* 113.24–26,

24 Barnes 1997: 37–40. He claims that that the *Enneads* correspond to Apollodorus' volumes of Epicharmus and not to any Aristotelian unit. Cf. Griffin 2015: 224–225.

25 The work is known from two indirect witnesses as well as from Ms. Ayasofya 4833, cf. Hein 1985: 415. In what follows I am dependent on Hein's German translations or reconstructions of the Greek from the Arabic. See also Moraux 1951; Düring 1957.

26 See Rashed 2005: CCVII with n. 2 for a confident identification. See Dorandi in this volume for alternatives.

cf. no. 99 Hein). Ptolemy's work (and thus perhaps also Andronicus') contained a biography of Aristotle and a copy of his will, followed by the catalogue, in a pattern found in Diogenes Laertius and some of the Late Antique Lives of Aristotle.[27] Finally, item 100 in Hein's numbering is particularly instructive on the content and presentation of Andronicus' work:

> Other letters, found by Andronicus, in twenty books, and notes (ὑπομνήματα), for which you will find line numbers and *incipits* in the fifth book of Andronicus' *On the Catalogue of Aristotle's Books*.

Ptolemy (or some intermediate source) chose not to transcribe the details here, but we learn that Andronicus' practice for identifying individual books was to use stichometric details and incipits—this was in fact the only method ancient scholars had for matching titles to texts, especially those that extended to more than one papyrus scroll. Users of Andronicus' work could thus identify the relevant texts in their own copies, put them in the right order and weed out any spurious material.

Ptolemy is also the best source we have for the contents of Andronicus' catalogue: as we just saw, he may have shortened the original,[28] and does not come near listing 1,000 books. But we can detect a division into sections (which may have been more explicit in Andronicus),[29] the first one of which (nos. 1–28 Hein) contains exoteric works, including the dialogues *On Philosophy, On Justice*, and *On Poets* (nos. 1, 4, 7). The second section (nos. 29–54) corresponds very closely to the contents of our Aristotelian corpus, although the order is not that of Bekker's canon because logic is followed by ethics, politics, rhetoric and poetics, and then by physics and metaphysics. Otherwise, the titles and numbers of books are in conspicuous agreement with those of our mediaeval manuscripts, with very few exceptions. The absence of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is notable, and some treatises from the *Parva Naturalia* are also missing.[30] Conversely, the catalogue includes a work on *Proofs* (Ἀποδεικτικά, no. 33), the *Great Ethics* (no. 35), the *Anatomies* (the title was fused with *Movement of Animals* in the Arabic text, no. 46) and *On Plants*, all of which do not form part of the modern canon, although an *On Plants* and the *Great Ethics* are transmitted as part of the corpus. The final part of Ptolemy's catalogue includes collections

27 See chapter 12 in this volume, with further references.

28 Hein 1985: 417.

29 Hein 1985: 414 reconstructs the division by deploying many of the categories described by Elias (*On Aristotle's Categories* 113.20–116.35) who, as we saw, knew of Ptolemy's work.

30 *On Dreams, On Divination in Sleep, On Respiration*. See also Barnes 1997: 31–32.

of diverse material (divisions, collections of premises, definitions, problems, listed alphabetically—nos. 55–89), and rounds off with the Constitutions (no. 90), some miscellaneous titles and the collections of letters (nos. 91–102).

A comparison of this with the situation observed in Diogenes' catalogue is striking.[31] Quite apart from the identification of individual treatises or the "creation" of larger composite works from previously disparate one-book treatises, Andronicus' main contribution lies in presenting a highly organized version of the entire corpus, with a classification according to genre (esoteric works separated from exoteric dialogues and from collections of research material) and a systematic order imposed on the esoteric works according to the tripartition logic, ethics, physics/metaphysics.

We can gather more evidence, albeit somewhat disjointed, on Andronicus' involvement with the Aristotelian corpus from the ancient commentators on Aristotle. From Philoponus we learn that Andronicus advocated that the approach to Aristotle's writings should begin with logic, because this is where demonstration is expounded and it will enhance our understanding of all his other works where demonstration is employed. This view was opposed by Boethus, who thought physics should come first because it is more "familiar and knowable" (Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 5.15–24—note that Philoponus reports expository rather than hierarchical criteria for the classifications of both Peripatetics). In his choice to start with logic Andronicus was in agreement with a number of leading Stoics including Zeno and Chrysippus, while Boethus coincided with Panaetius and Posidonius (see Diogenes Laertius 7.40–41).[32] In this case, Andronicus' view prevailed and the logical works are still placed at the head of the Aristotelian corpus. Andronicus' section on logic must have begun with the *Categories*, on the grounds that (i) it was an elementary work, and (ii) it formed an introduction to demonstration rather than dialectic.[33] On the latter point, Andronicus reacted to an earlier reading of the work as an introduction to the *Topics* under the alternative title *Preliminaries to the Topics* (τὰ πρὸ τῶν τόπων; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 379.9–12). This placement of the *Categories* at the head of the corpus had, as Robert Sharples observed, long-term implications for the emphasis that was given to the problem of universals and the debate on being, knowledge

31 Barnes 1997: 39–44 acknowledges this, but argues that the catalogue in Diogenes cannot be claimed to be representative of the situation pre-Andronicus. See Hatzimichali 2013: 23–26 for a discussion of this issue.

32 For more on the Peripatetic debate on the beginning of philosophy, see chapter 5 in this volume.

33 Griffin 2015: 29–41.

and language.[34] For the shorter term, close to Andronicus' own time, it is not clear whether the prominent position of the *Categories* in Andronicus' corpus was the cause or the effect of a remarkable surge of interest in the little treatise, involving people like Aristo and Eudorus whose exegetical activity is to be dated to the first half of the first century.[35] Michael Griffin argues for the former, but Riccardo Chiaradonna has pointed to other factors that could have made the *Categories* an inviting subject for commentary, including its conveniently small size and the presentation of a radically non-Stoic viewpoint on issues of great interest to the Stoics such as the concept of relatives.[36] Andronicus, with his paraphrase and exegetical work on the *Categories*, could have been part of this debate before he went on to engage with the corpus as a whole.

Andronicus' work on the Aristotelian corpus also dealt with questions of authenticity. He athetized the treatise *On Interpretation* on the basis of what he perceived as an inaccurate reference to *On the Soul*:

> For when Aristotle says there that thoughts are affections in the soul as has been said in *On the Soul*, Andronicus says that this is not found anywhere in *On the Soul*, so that it is necessary to regard either *On the Soul* or *On Interpretation* as spurious. But it is agreed that *On the Soul* is by Aristotle; so *On Interpretation* must be spurious (Philoponus, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 27.23–2, trans. Sharples).[37]

Andronicus' position was also rejected by subsequent commentators in the case of the so-called *Postpraedicamenta* (= *Categories* 10–15), which he treated as an interpolation intended as a bridge between the *Categories* and the *Topics* by those who gave the *Categories* the title *Preliminaries to the Topics*. Finally, Simplicius (*On Aristotle's Physics* 923.8–13) informs us that Andronicus was in favor of a division of the *Physics* into five books *On Nature* and three books *On Motion*—or rather that he advocated placing these two groups of books adjacent to one another (cf. 924.18–22).[38] This passage of Simplicius is especially

34 Sharples 2008: 274.

35 "They [sc. Achaicus and Sotion] criticize the old commentators on the *Categories*, Boethus and Aristo and Andronicus and Eudorus and Athenodorus" (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 159.31–32).

36 Griffin 2015: 22, 72–73; Chiaradonna 2011: 98–100. Cf. Hatzimichali 2013: 16–17.

37 Philoponus refutes Andronicus by claiming that at *On the Soul* 1.1, 402a9 and 403a5–8 Aristotle does treat thoughts as affections of the soul. Cf. Ammonius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 5.24–6.6.

38 It seems that Andronicus is here at pains to justify the grouping of book 5 with 1–4 (which makes little sense) rather than with 6 and 8 by appealing to correspondence between Eudemus and Theophrastus. Cf. Ross 1936: 3–6; Barnes 1997: 34–37.

significant because it gives a precise reference to Andronicus' work (cf. the title *On the Catalogue of Aristotle's Books* in Ptolemy): "in the third book (of his) *On Aristotle's Books*" (923.10).[39]

It is clear, therefore, that Andronicus' contribution to the construction of the Aristotelian corpus was made in the form of a separate treatise and not through an "edition" of the texts (in the sense of taking responsibility for readings, consulting different manuscripts in order to choose between variants etc.). In fact, there are hardly any references to Andronicus as a textual critic. Dexippus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 21.18–19, is actually a reference to Andronicus' paraphrase of the *Categories* (cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 30.1–5), and Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 440.14–17, contains Andronicus' interpretation of an alternative text at *Physics* 3.3, 202a14, and must come from an exegetical work rather than a critical edition.[40]

Andronicus' work *On Aristotle's Books* listed two collections of letters, one of which was "found" by Andronicus himself (no. 100 Hein). These must have included the spurious correspondence between Aristotle and Alexander the Great, for which we know that Andronicus was the source. The letter in question attributes to Aristotle himself the publication of the "acroamatic" writings (litterally "designed for hearing only", i.e. the writings associated with Aristotle's teaching to a select group of pupils):

> When king Alexander knew that he had published those books of the "acroatic" set [. . .] he sent a letter to Aristotle, saying that the philosopher had not done right in publishing the books and so revealing to the public the acroatic training . . . "For in what other way, said he, can I excel the rest, if that instruction which I have received from you becomes common property of all the world?" . . . Aristotle replied to him as follows: "Know that the acroatic books, which you complain have been made public and not hidden as they contained secrets had neither been made public nor hidden, since they can be understood only by those who have heard my lectures." I have added copies of both letters, taken from the book of the philosopher Andronicus (Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 20.5.11–12).[41]

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39 The text here is uncertain; I am reconstructing the title of Andronicus' work as τὰ Ἀριστοτέλους βιβλία or <περὶ τῶν> Ἀριστοτέλους βιβλίων, identifiable with the book known to Plutarch and to Ptolemy.

40 See also Barnes 1997: 29–30.

41 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 8.16–39; Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 7.6–8 (without the reference to Andronicus).

The distinction between acroamatic and exoteric works must indeed be very old—there are references to exoteric works in the surviving Aristotelian treatises[42]—but the letters included by Andronicus in his book promote the perception that it was the acroamatic writings that contained privileged teaching intended for devoted disciples. Thus Andronicus could not claim to be publishing completely new material that had never been brought to light before, but he could justify as genuinely Aristotelian his separate listing of only esoteric works in thematic/systematic order, and support the claim that this privileged section of his *pinakes* was the "essential Aristotle."

We may briefly summarize the evidence so far on the extent of Andronicus' activity: he made certain texts available to a wider public, which could have included hitherto inaccessible works (or simply neglected ones), benefitting from access to a set of copies of celebrated provenance and antiquity. He produced a work *On Aristotle's Books* in at least five volumes, which contained a catalogue with a section that gives the Aristotelian corpus a shape very close to what we find in our modern editions since Bekker. The work seems to have contained a biography as well as some letters that Andronicus used for his own purposes, whether he believed them genuine or not. The catalogue was accompanied by comments and arguments in support of Andronicus' choices in the overall order of presentation (logic first), as well as his responses to problems of authenticity such as the cases of the treatise *On Interpretation* and the *Postpraedicamenta*. It is important to stress that these atheteses, in accordance with ancient practice, took the form of comments (perhaps with the sign of the obelos placed beside the title in the catalogue), rather than of outright omission.[43]

We must not forget that Andronicus also ordered and catalogued Theophrastus' treatises, as stated by Porphyry. We have two snippets of evidence for his work on Theophrastus from two marginal *scholia*, on Parisinus 1853 (MS E of Aristotle's physical works) and Vaticanus Urbinas 41 (an early tenth-century manuscript of Theophrastus) respectively. According to the former, neither Hermippus nor Andronicus included the short *Metaphysics* in their catalogues of Theophrastus' books (the term used for the catalogues is ἀναγραφή). According to the second *scholion*, Hermippus entitled the seventh book of Theophrastus' botanical work *On Undershrubs and Herbaceous Plants*, while Andronicus opted for *Inquiry into Plants* (Περὶ φυτῶν ἱστορία),

42 Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics* 2.1, 1218b34; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.13, 1102a26. Cf. Cicero, *To Atticus* 4.16.2 and *On Goals* 5.12.

43 *Pace* Barnes 1997: 34. Cf. Hatzimichali 2013: 22 with n. 68; Griffin 2015: 227–228.

presumably for the entire work.[44] We have no explicit evidence for the case of Aristotle, but it is not unlikely that there, too, Andronicus opted for more generic titles, covering books that were previously known under special individual headings.

4 Reaction to Andronicus in the Second Century AD

The similarity of the central section of Andronicus' catalogue, as preserved by Ptolemy, to the Aristotelian corpus that came down to us through the manuscript tradition is testimony to Andronicus' great impact on Aristotelian studies. This is not to say, however, that his success was instant or that his views were immediately universally endorsed. His atheteses of the treatise *On Interpretation* and the *Postpraedicamenta* were rejected by later commentators. Moreover, the debate on the construction of the Aristotelian corpus was ongoing still in the second century AD, with Andronicus' catalogue as its basis from the first century AD onward (as indicated by Plutarch's "now In circulation," see above 86–87). The work of Adrastus of Aphrodisias is indicative of this debate: alongside other works, including some very important astronomical observations, Adrastus produced a study which is cited by Simplicius both as *On the Order of Aristotle's Philosophy* (*On Aristotle's Categories* 16.2) and as *On the Order of Aristotle's Writings* (*On Aristotle's Categories* 18.16). Unless we are dealing with two different works, which is unlikely, this demonstrates the very close interdependence between the understanding of a philosophical system and the reading of the relevant philosopher's books in a particular order.

The first point on which Adrastus was at odds with Andronicus concerns the connection between the *Categories* and the *Topics*:

> Given that it is not just anyone who placed the books of *Topics* immediately after the *Categories*, but Adrastus of Aphrodisias, a man who was among the genuine Peripatetics, in his *On the Order of Aristotle's Philosophy* wants the *Topics* to be placed after the book of the *Categories*, what might be the reason behind the judgment of this prominent man? Perhaps that the knowledge of simple terms through the book of the *Categories* must come first, but before the method of proof and the syllogisms and propositions that precede it logically and necessarily, he delivers the method based on generally accepted opinions and probabilities (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 15.36–16.8).

44 See Rashed 2005: CXCVIII–CCVI.

Adrastus is reported as a supporter of the placement of the *Topics* immediately following the *Categories*; Simplicius does not say explicitly that Adrastus favored the title *Preliminaries to the Topics* instead of *Categories*, but he seems to imply so a few lines after this extract. Even if we leave the title aside, it remains an important issue of ordering and organizing the Aristotelian corpus, and in particular the logical treatises that came to be known as the *Organon*. There seems to be agreement between Adrastus and Andronicus that the *Categories* (by whatever title) should come first, and the controversy lies in whether it should be followed by the *Topics* or the *Analytics* (given that Andronicus athetized the treatise *On Interpretation*). It is possible that Adrastus sought to restore the pre-Andronican order of the treatises, believing it to be more authentic, or he could have independent philosophical reasons of his own for his ordering.[45] Adrastus also remarked on an alternative version of the *Categories*, noting a different incipit in the two versions (the alternative was: "Of beings, some are homonymous, some are synonymous")[46] but the same number of lines (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 18.16–20; Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 13.1–5). These were the standard ancient tools for bibliographic identification of particular books and the indicators an ancient pinacographer, including Andronicus, would use to identify or distinguish between books presenting the same title.

Similarly to the *Categories/Topics* case, Adrastus provides evidence that the issue of the books making up the *Physics* was not entirely settled in the second century AD either:

> Adrastus in his *On the Order of Aristotle's Writings* reports that some people gave the treatise the title *On First Principles*, others *Lectures on Physics*; and he says that others again entitled the first five books *On First Principles* and the remaining three *On Motion*. We can see that Aristotle too mentioned them in many places in this way (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 4.11–16).

Adrastus is here reporting on a tradition of different titles and a division of the *Physics*; a few pages later we get confirmation from Simplicius that he supported this division into *On First Principles* and *On Motion* and made the

45 The dialectical reading of the *Categories* and its close connection with the *Topics* has strong support among modern scholars, too: Menn 1995; Bodéus 2001. See also the discussion in Griffin 2015: 36–41.

46 Cf. the transmitted opening: "Homonyms are those things that have only a name in common" (*Categories*. 1a1).

argument from cross-references that we have in this passage. But Adrastus confirms that the *Physics* was also known in the second century as an eight-book unit with two alternative titles.[47] While it is correct to assume that all this debate on book divisions and titles was conducted in the special dedicated treatises (Andronicus' *On Aristotle's Books* and Adrastus' *On the Order of Aristotle's Books*), we may still wonder in what form these books were circulating. Given that each book would have to circulate on a separate papyrus roll, might Adrastus have found copies of the same book (say our Book 6) both with the title *Lectures on Physics* 6 and *On Motion* 1? This is the type of question to which we cannot get a definitive answer, which makes it harder to assess the extent to which Andronicus' construction of the corpus was beginning to influence the production and circulation of actual copies of the books.

What we can say with a greater degree of confidence is that there was no authoritative text in the second century AD, that is, there was no particular version whose readings were preferred by commentators among the variants available. Andronicus had not offered such a text, and nor had anyone else, it seems. The attitude of Aspasius and Alexander of Aphrodisias is indicative:

> We must point out that Aspasius writes the wording as follows [= Aristotle, *Physics* 3.2, 202a3–4]: "the mover too is moved, as has been said—every mover, that is, which is capable of causing motion" [. . .] And Alexander knows about this reading and comments on it in a way suitable to a view that is not his own, but puts in first place the other reading which says "the mover too is moved, as has been said—every mover, that is, which is capable of being moved" (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 436.13–21).

The expression "writes the wording" (γράφει τὴν λέξιν) indicates that Aspasius here did indeed opt for the quoted reading, but there is evidence that he was not committed to the principle that only one reading can be correct—he often reports variants without taking a stand as to which should be preferred.[48] Alexander of Aphrodisias commented equally on Aspasius' version, even though he made it clear it was not his own. But he placed another reading first (which is the reading adopted by modern editors), and we do not know how many other variants he might have discussed. There are many more similar cases where alternative readings associated mostly with individuals rather than manuscripts or sets of manuscripts are brought up and discussed. Thus second-century commentaries seem to have offered a rich repository

47 On these issues see Rashed 2005: CCXVIII–CCXX.

48 See Wittwer 1998.

of variants, where a preference for the "correct" reading may or may not be expressed, with more or less conviction.[49] It is clear that these commentators did not think of themselves as editors, with a responsibility to put forward one correct version of what Aristotle wrote, but as interpreters of the text in its multiple guises. We know only of one second-century scholar who set himself the task of correcting actual copies of Aristotelian texts, namely Galen:

> The books that, following correction, were written by myself in clean copies—from a group of texts that were admittedly obscure, but also contained inaccurate readings [...] such were Theophrastus' and Aristotle's [works] and those of Eudemus and Clitomachus [or Clytus?][50] and Phanias' books and most of Chrysippus' and those of all the old doctors (*On Freedom from Grief* 14–15 Boudon-Millot et al.).

Galen claims that among the books he lost in the fire that consumed the Palatine library and his warehouses on the Via Sacra in AD 192 were fresh copies he had made himself of texts he intended to publish. In the omitted section he speaks of "my publication" (ἔκδοσιν ἐμήν), and he details the types of editorial intervention and correction he had engaged in, including ensuring that there are no missing or superfluous words; adding critical signs in the margins (*paragraphos, diplê, coronis*) to indicate beginning and end of books or sections; and adding the all-important punctuation that is especially valuable in the case of obscure books. It is particularly interesting (though not surprising) that Galen classes the texts of Aristotle and these other philosophers among the "obscure" texts, that is, especially difficult texts where extra editorial help is needed. But the texts he had originally found were not only obscure by nature but had also suffered from bad transmission, by contrast with the high-quality copies of Plato and Homer that he refers to a few paragraphs earlier (*On Freedom from Grief* 13). It is not impossible that, as Marwan Rashed argues, the old and damaged books Galen worked on, which may have included the very rare Aristotelian *On Plants*, were direct descendants of the collection brought to Rome by Sulla.[51] Thus the "Roman edition" of Aristotle, in the sense of the text-critical activity of διόρθωσις, was not realized by Andronicus, but by Galen three centuries later, only to perish again in a fire soon after! Galen is also informative on the titles of the logical treatises, where a consensus was beginning to form, even though he himself was not entirely in agreement:

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49 Cf. Rashed 2005: CCXIV.

50 See Rashed 2011: 57–58.

51 Rashed 2011 (especially 76–7).

> Among them there are three [books of commentary] on Aristotle's *On Interpertation*, four on the first book of *On Syllogisms* and an equal number on the second. Almost all of my contemporaries give them the title *Prior Analytics*, just as they call *Second* [*Analytics*] the books on proof. Aristotle himself mentions the *"Prior"* as [the books] written by him *On Syllogisms* and the *"Second"* as *On Proof*, on which there are also preserved commentaries by myself, six volumes on the first book and five on the second (Galen, *My Own Books* XIX 41.20–42.7 K).

5 Conclusion

By way of conclusion, it is worth recapping the different ways in which scholars and others made an impact on the circulation and transmission of Aristotle's works from the first century BC to the second century AD. The talk of rediscovery from total oblivion is surely exaggerated, but we can see how such an impression might have been created: the sudden appearance of a cache of old copies with a celebrated pedigree could stir renewed interest in the first century BC, especially if promoted by an ambitious individual like Apellicon, regardless of whether more copies were already available. Following the emergence of these valuable copies, there were allegedly careless publications without much consideration for the correct readings (by Apellicon and the Roman booksellers criticized by Strabo); some efforts to improve the physical state of the books were made by Tyrannio, and their results were published by Andronicus.

Andronicus also instigated a detailed discussion on the order of Aristotle's books, questions of authenticity, titles, book divisions etc., which continued at least until the time of Adrastus in the second century AD. In his capacity as pinacographer, the value of Andronicus' contribution lies in presenting a holistic picture of the corpus that demonstrated Aristotle's credentials as a systematic philosopher in the face of the highly organized Stoic system. Such a picture emerges from his central section of acroamatic works much more effectively than from Diogenes' Hellenistic catalogue. His impact on the shape of individual treatises is harder to pin down, because individual works may have been known in different formats across the Hellenistic and late Hellenistic world. His task was not to claim originality (he may have left many treatises just as he found them), but to adopt the format he judged to be closest to Aristotle's intentions and impose it consistently throughout the corpus.[52]

52 See Hatzimichali 2013: 26.

What Andronicus *did not* do was to provide an authoritative text by writing out a fresh copy of the entire corpus or by entering corrections on existing copies. The absence of such a "standard edition" led to the even-handed discussion of variants by second-century commentators and left Galen with allegedly poor copies of Aristotelian texts which he sought to improve.

All the while, the value judgment about the superior content of the acroamatic works was gaining force, even outside philosophical circles (as we saw from Gellius), and this had the most profound effect on the fate of the Aristotelian corpus, namely the loss of all of the philosopher's exoteric works. As Riccardo Chiaradonna argues, the shift of interest toward the "technical" acroamatic works was gradual, and was not complete until the time of Alexander of Aphrodisias;[53] but even Alexander and his circle would have required a bibliographical tool indicating the range of books that fell under this privileged category, and they could find it in the central section of Andronicus' catalogue. Andronicus' bibliographical efforts were endorsed by Porphyry, as we saw, and through him by all the Neoplatonists who were the principal readers of Aristotle in late antiquity, leading on to the period of our earliest direct witnesses for the Aristotelian text.

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53 Chiaradonna 2011 (especially 107–112).

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CHAPTER 5

Aristotelianism in the First Century BC

Andrea Falcon

1 A New Generation of Peripatetic Philosophers

The division of the Peripatetic tradition into a Hellenistic and a post-Hellenistic period is not a modern invention. It is already accepted in antiquity. Aspasius speaks of an old and a new generation of Peripatetic philosophers. Among the philosophers who belong to the new generation, he singles out Andronicus of Rhodes and Boethus of Sidon.[1] Strabo adopts a similar division. He too distinguishes between the older Peripatetics, who came immediately after Theophrastus, and their successors.[2] He collectively describes the latter as better able to do philosophy in the manner of Aristotle (φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ ἀριστοτελίζειν). It remains unclear what Strabo means by doing philosophy in the manner of Aristotle.[3] But he certainly thinks that the philosophers who belong to the new generation, and not those who belong to the old one, deserve the title of true Aristotelians. For Strabo, the event separating the old from the new Peripatos is the rediscovery and publication of Aristotle's writings.

We may want to resist Strabo's negative characterization of the earlier Peripatetics. For Strabo, they were not able to engage in philosophy in any serious way but were content to declaim general theses.[4] This may be an unfair judgment, ultimately based on the anachronistic assumption that any serious philosophy requires engagement with an authoritative text.[5] Still, the emphasis that Strabo places on the rediscovery of Aristotle's writings suggests that the latter were at the center of the critical engagement with Aristotle in the

1 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 44.20–45.16.

2 Strabo, *Geography* 13.1.54. Cf. Plutarch, *Life of Sulla* 26.1–2. He too speaks of older Peripatetics (πρεσβύτεροι Περιπατετικοί), making the same distinction as Strabo.

3 Elsewhere Strabo tells us that Posidonius, the leading Stoic philosopher of the first century BC, was criticized for his ἀριστοτελίζειν. In this case, ἀριστοτελίζειν is used to emphasize what is perceived as an excessive concern with the search for the causes (πολύ . . . τὸ αἰτιολογικὸν . . . καὶ τὸ ἀριστοτελίζον).

4 I am adopting the translation offered by Sharples (2010: 24). Hahm (2008: 98) renders the Greek as follows: "[the older Peripatetics] were unable to philosophize in a systematic [or substantive] way but merely prattled on about philosophical propositions."

5 Cf. Hahm 2007 (especially 98–101).

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first century BC. The extant evidence is scarce but there is no doubt that, at least for some of the noted Peripatetics of the century, a critical engagement with Aristotle was at the very heart of their philosophical activity. For this reason, we often refer to these philosophers collectively as "early commentators." But we must be careful not to generalize from the little we know about some of them or, worse, to project back to first century literary conventions that make full sense only in the subsequent tradition. There is no compelling reason to think that critical engagement with Aristotle had to be codified in the specific form of the philosophical commentary.

When we consider the extant evidence for the critical engagement with Aristotle of the first century BC, we immediately realize that this engagement was not merely explanatory and philological but informed by a strong philosophical agenda. Moreover, it did not result in the adoption of a single interpretation of Aristotle. Quite the opposite. What is especially interesting about the Peripatetic tradition in the first century BC is that it broke down into a number of different, and often competing, interpretations of Aristotle. Some of them appear to have been creative interpretations based on a selective reading of his writings and responding to essentially post-Aristotelian concerns. This is hardly surprising, as the Peripatetic philosophers of the first century BC were not doing philosophy in a vacuum. Rather, they were taking part in a larger philosophical debate, to which they consciously contributed from an Aristotelian point of view.

2 The Starting Point and Parts of Philosophy

For a first impression of the way the Peripatetic engagement with Aristotle in the first century BC may have resulted in the creative use of his philosophy, we may look at how the Peripatetics contributed to the debate on the starting point and parts of philosophy.

That philosophy is a whole that consists of three parts—logic, physics, and ethics—is a Stoic thesis.[6] The Stoics developed a number of analogies designed to illuminate their distinctive understanding of the unity and nature of philosophy. They also discussed the order in which the three parts are to be

6 While there is some evidence that this tripartition goes back to the old Academy, and in particular to Xenocrates (Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Professors* 7.16), there is no doubt that it was a staple of Stoic philosophy.

approached. Some of them argued that philosophy should start with ethics, while others with logic.[7]

The idea that philosophy has parts made ripples in the Peripatetic tradition before the first century BC. In the Hellenistic account of Aristotle's philosophy preserved by Diogenes Laertius, the Stoic tripartion of philosophy into physics, ethics, and logic is replaced by a bifurcation of philosophy into practical and theoretical philosophy. Practical philosophy is further divided into an ethical and a political part, whereas theoretical philosophy is split into logic and physics. Finally, we are told that logic is not properly speaking a part but rather a tool or an instrument of philosophy.[8] Some scholars have felt that this is a rather confused, and ultimately hopeless, account of Aristotle's philosophy.[9] Others have argued that this account shows how the Peripatetic tradition responded to theoretical pressures that are external to Aristotle's philosophy.[10] In any case, the idea that logic is an instrument rather than a part of philosophy became a central tenet of Peripatetic philosophy.[11] Andronicus of Rhodes invoked it to argue that logic ought to be the starting point of philosophy precisely because it is an instrument of philosophy. He seems to have argued that one must understand the instrument before thinking about its use.[12]

That we should begin with logic was not universally accepted. Within the Peripatetic tradition, Boethus of Sidon appears to have recommended starting with physics because we should start from things that are clearer and better known to us.[13] This language is reminiscent of the opening chapter of *Physics* 1,

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7 For a helpful introduction to the Stoic division of philosophy, see Ierodiakonou 1993.

8 The reader will find a translation of Diogenes' account in chapter 14 (The Ancient Biographical Tradition on Aristotle).

9 Moraux 1986: 247–294.

10 Bodéüs 1995.

11 For more on the Peripatetic conception of logic as a tool, and not a part, of philosophy, see Ierodiakonou 1998.

12 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 5.15–20; Elias, *On Aristotle's Categories* 117.17–25 combined with 118.20–24. Andronicus' idea of logic was certainly different from the one presupposed in the Hellenistic account of Aristotle's philosophy preserved by Diogenes Laertius. For one thing, there is no mention of the *Categories* and the treatise *On Interpretation* in Diogenes Laetius, whereas we know that Andronicus concerned himself with both. While he considered the treatise *On Interpretation* a spurious work, he placed the *Categories* at the very beginning of his catalogue of Aristotle's writings. He regarded this text as a useful introduction to Aristotle's philosophy. For a reconstruction of Andronicus' reading of the *Categories*, as well as an evaluation of his contribution to the fortunes of this text in post-Hellenistic philosophy, see Griffin 2015.

13 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 5.16–18: "Boethus of Sidon says that we should start from physics, since this is more familiar and knowable for us, *and* [*he says that*] *one should*

whose methodological significance Boethus presumably took to go beyond the narrow boundaries of that book. The things that are better known to us are not physical theories but rather concrete natural things such as flesh, veins, and sinews. They should be our starting point because we are perceptually familar with them from childhood onward.[14]

The view that the study of philosophy should begin with physics, and in particular with the study of concrete natural objects, did not win general acceptance in the Peripatetic tradition. But it certainly suggests that, at least in the first century BC, the debate on the starting point of philosophy was rather fluid. It would be a mistake to think that this debate was entirely internal to the Peripatetic tradition, and that it was limited to the question of how we should be introduced to Aristotle's philosophy. Rather, Andronicus and Boethus were taking part in a larger philosophical debate, to which they intended to contribute from the point of view of people informed by Aristotle's philosophy. As Aristotelians, they added new arguments to an old debate.

3 Ontology

Andronicus shaped the fortune of the *Categories* by placing this treatise at the beginning of his catalogue of Aristotle's school writings. Yet we cannot fully account for the success of the *Categories* in the early post-Hellenistic period merely by appealing to its strategic position at the start of the philosophical curriculum. The ultimate reason of the success of this short but enigmatic text still escapes us.[15] A full review of the results reached by the early interpreters of the *Categories* would go beyond the boundaries of this chapter.[16] I will concentrate on the extant evidence for Boethus of Sidon, who was best known in antiquity for his in-depth study of the *Categories*. Boethus developed an ontology that strikes us as a creative reading of the *Categories*.

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start from the things that are more clear and knowable." The italicized passage is a clear echo of *Physics* 1.1, 184a16–26.

14 Sharples 2010: 40n2 emphasizes the fact that the concrete things mentioned are (parts of) *living* things. But there is no evidence that these things are mentioned *qua* living things. For one thing, biology played no special role in Boethus' interpretation of Aristotle's philosophy. For another, flesh, veins, and sinews are explicitly introduced as things that are familiar to us from childhood. Moreover, they are things that are familiar to us in the sense that they are seen, touched, and handled, by us (ψηλαφώμενα ἡμῖν).

15 For an attempt to explain the success of the *Categories* in the first century BC, see Sharples 2008b: 273–287.

16 For a study of the extant evidence, see Griffin 2015.

We have seen that Boethus recommended starting philosophy with the study of concrete natural things because we are perceptually familiar with them from childhood onward. If we adopt this recommendation, and make concrete natural things the object of a study to be conducted in the style of *Physics* 1, we arrive at the conclusion that these things are hylomorphic compounds: they consist of matter and form. But how is the relation between matter and form to be understood? Interestingly enough, Boethus appears to have conceived of form as an attribute of matter. His view seems to have been that form qualifies matter in a certain way. As a result, he seems to have denied that form is a substance. This is a striking result, especially if we consider that Aristotle makes form not just a substance but also the essence of the hylomorphic compound. Boethus took a different view, though one that need not be seen an un-Aristotelian. He argued that form is not substance by employing the theoretical framework introduced in the *Categories*. He adopted the negative criterion for being a primary substance that Aristotle himself offers in the *Categories*: something is a substance if, and only if, it is not said of a subject and is not in a subject (5, 2a11–12). On the basis of this criterion, Boethus argued that the honorific title of primary substance applied only to matter and to the compound of matter and form.[17] Boethus denied that form was substance because he conceived of it as something which is in matter as in a subject. We can link his conception of the relation between form and matter to another piece of information preserved in the commentary tradition in connection with Aristotle's analysis of change offered in *Physics* I 7. Boethus distinguished between matter and subject: while matter is formless and shapeless, a subject is matter that has received form and shape.[18]

17 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 78.4–20: "Boethus says that the definition of primary substance applies to both matter and the compound: for not being said of any subject and not being in any subject belongs to both of them, for neither of them is in something else. But the compound, even though it is not in another subject, has the form which is in it as in something else, namely matter, whereas matter does not have something which is in something else. [. . .] In this way, Boethus says that matter and the compound will be subsumed in the category of substance, but form will be outside [the category of] substance: it will fall under a different category (either quality or quantity or some other one)."

18 Themistius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 26.20–24: "matter no longer persists as matter in qualified things (for if it is matter, then it is in its own right without form and shape), but it has right away changed into a subject since the latter is accompanied by both form and limit, for it is also a subject for form and limit. Matter is obviously named in relation to what is going to be, but the subject is named in relation to what is already in it" (R. Todd's translation, slightly emended). Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 211.15–18: "Boethus said that it is spoken of as matter by being without shape and form; for matter is thought to be

The overall impression is that we are presented with two surviving pieces of a coherent philosophical position.[19] Boethus placed matter at the center of his ontology. As a result, he regarded individual substances as matter qualified in a certain way. He also conceived of matter as having no particular quality in its own right, but as receiving qualities only insofar as it is the ultimate subject of predication. In addition to placing matter at the center of his ontology, Boethus claimed that universals such as man and animal have no reality.[20] This is another surprising claim, especially if we keep in mind that the *Categories* grants the status of secondary substance to universals such as man and animal. For one thing, they can be the subject of predication. For instance, we can say that man is an animal. How could Boethus deny reality to a species like man? The newly discovered evidence in the fragment of the anonymous commentary preserved in the Archimedes palimpsest contains crucial information on how Boethus dealt with this aspect of Aristotle's theory of predication. He denied that man is a genuine subject of predication, arguing that animal is predicated of man *as if* of a subject.[21]

Rejections of universals, demotion of form to the status of something that merely qualifies matter, and promotion of matter to the role of ultimate subject of predication are key elements of an Aristotelian ontology that is inspired by a creative interpretation of the *Categories*. We cannot explain this interpretation merely by saying that it is the result of a reading that emphasizes certain aspects of Aristotle's thought to the exclusion of others. We also need to credit Boethus with a specific philosophical agenda, which is at least in part the result of the philosophical climate of the time. It is tempting to speculate that the ultimate goal of his agenda was to produce an Aristotelian ontology that could reduce the gap between Aristotelianism and Stoicism. In other words, Boethus returned to Aristotle's text and found the conceptual resources to offer what he may have regarded as an Aristotelian answer to Stoic philosophy.

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named in relation to what is going to be; but when it receives the form it is no longer called matter but subject, for something is said to be a subject for what is already present in it." If we read *Physics* 1 as an introduction to Aristotle's philosophy, and connect what Aristotle says there with what he says in the *Categories*, then we have to be prepared to consider matter not only as subject of change but also as subject of predication.

19 Cf. Rashed 2013: 53–77.

20 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 50.6–9. For a full discussion of this testimony, see Chiaradonna 2013: 299–328.

21 Chiaradonna, Rashed, and Sedley 2012: "For it is not appropriate to respond to the example cited by saying what Boethus says: animal is predicated of man *as if* of a subject; for none of these generic items is a subject" (3.19–22).

4 Physics

The *Categories* loomed large in the first century BC, well beyond the narrow boundaries of the Peripatetic tradition. Yet we should stop short of making the return to Aristotle contingent on a single text. As a matter of fact, not all the Peripatetic philosophers active in the first century BC engaged with the *Categories*. Xenarchus of Seleucia is a case in point. Alongside Boethus, Xenarchus was arguably the most original philosopher working within the Peripatetic tradition in the first century BC, but there is no extant evidence that associates him with the *Categories*.

Xenarchus critically engaged with Aristotle's *On the Heavens*. He advanced a set of objections and difficulties against the doctrine of the fifth substance. His intent was to refute the doctrine that the heavens are made of a special celestial body, unique to them. He also developed a theory of natural motion that looks like a clever reworking of Aristotle's theory of natural motion.[22] For Aristotle, rectilinear motion is the natural motion of the sublunary simple bodies. When these bodies have reached their natural place, they remain at rest. Xenarchus consciously departed from this tenet and argued that a natural body in its natural place either is at rest or moves in a circle. Moreover, he argued that we should make claims about the natural motion of a body with respect to the body in its natural place because it is only in its natural place that a body has fully realized its nature. Among other things, this means that the natural motion of a body is not the rectilinear motion that it performs to reach the natural place but rather the circular motion that the body may perform once it has reached that place. Consider how Xenarchus used these revisions of Aristotle's theory of natural motion to argue that the heavens are made of a constantly moving fire. Briefly, fire moves upward until it reaches its natural place. At that point, fire will not stop moving, as this would be in conflict with its non-stationary nature. Rather, its nature manifests itself in the form of circular motion, which is the only motion that fire can perform without leaving its natural place. Finally, since there is nothing that can prevent the fire from continuing to move in a circle, it will move in a circle forever.

Xenarchus was not content with a reworking of Aristotle's theory of natural motion that made the so-called fifth substance expendable. He offered an account of the natural world by appealing solely to natural causes (form, matter, and the eternal rotation of the heavens).[23] He seems, in particular,

22 See Falcon 2011 for study of Xenarchus' criticism of the doctrine of the fifth substance as well as a reconstruction of his positive doctrine of natural motion.

23 Julian, *Oration* 8 [5] 3, 107.7–108.1.

to have envisioned the natural world as a self-maintaining causal system into which the heavens, with their eternal circular motion, enter as an efficient cause in the explanation of the continuity of the process of generation and corruption taking place in the sublunary world. It is not difficult to find texts in the Aristotelian corpus that may be invoked to promote such a reading of Aristotle's physics. The second book of Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*, where celestial simple motion enters as an efficient cause in the explanation of the eternity of the process of generation and corruption, is one of them. Of course, Aristotle never intended to give the impression that a full explanation of why the world is eternal can be given by remaining within the boundaries of the natural world. Quite the opposite. In *Physics* 8, Aristotle posits the existence of an unmoved mover, which is by definition external to the natural world, as a causal factor in the explanation of the existence of an unbroken continuous chain of motion.

From this brief review of the extant evidence for Xenarchus we come away with the impression that he advanced a creative reading of Aristotle's physics. We can speculate on the reasons that may have motivated his reading. For one, the doctrine of the fifth substance was highly controversial. For another, the doctrine of the unmoved mover was also regarded as an unnecessary addition to Aristotle's physical theory. There is no doubt that any interpretation of Aristotle's physics that would have made these two doctrines expendable would have been received with favor. And yet we may wonder how successful Xenarchus was in his revision of Aristotle's physics. We can approach this question by returning to the thesis that the world is a self-maintaining causal system, and in particular by reflecting on this thesis vis-à-vis the Aristotelian commitment to the eternity of the world.

That the natural world is eternal in the sense that it was not generated and will never be destroyed was perceived as a key commitment in the Aristotelian tradition. There is absolutely no evidence that Xenarchus abandoned it. In fact, his reworking of Aristotle's doctrine of natural motion is fully compatible with eternalism. However, Xenarchus may not have been able to give us a sufficiently robust version of this position (at least by Aristotle's lights). Recall that, for Xenarchus, the heavens move eternally in a circle as a result of the natural motion of their matter. They are made of fire, and fire moves in a circle forever when it has reached its natural place. But note that, while the fire that has reached its natural place may be removed from the cycle of generation and corruption that takes place in the sublunary world, it still retains its capacity to change into the other simple bodies. This means that, at least in principle, the heavens could be destroyed. We can expand on this last point by

reflecting on the meaning of the Greek term φθαρτός. This term can be used to refer to something that will be eventually destroyed. However, it can also be used to refer to something that is merely capable of being destroyed, whether or not it will eventually undergo destruction. One may exploit this ambiguity to argue that the world is capable of being destroyed even though it is never going to be destroyed.

What is peculiar in Xenarchus' position becomes clearer if we compare his reworking of Aristotle's physics with the extant information about Critolaus of Phaselis, the champion of Peripatetic philosophy in the second half of the second century BC.[24] Like Xenarchus, Critolaus developed an original interpretation of Aristotle's physics, which included the view the natural world is a self-maintaining causal system that is cause of its own eternal existence. However, there is at least one important difference that sets this interpretation apart from the one defended by Xenarchus. Critolaus appears to have adopted the view that the celestial world is made of an intelligent, and indeed rational element, which he called αἰθήρ. He seems to have invoked this element to explain not only the imperishability of the heavens but also the thesis that the world is a causal system in which the heavens act upon the sublunary world without being acted upon by it. It is telling that this element is described as impervious to suffering any changes or affections.[25] But if this element is imperishable and intelligent, it is also divine. It may be not just a god but rather the god listed as one of the two principles (the other is matter) in the doxographical tradition preserved by Epiphanius.[26] It does not take long to realize that this god makes the unmoved mover expendable. On this interpretation of Aristotle's physics, the gap with Stoic physics is significantly reduced. Of course, the Stoics would have never accepted the view that the heavens are made of a special simple body, unique to them. But Critolaus needed this doctrine to secure a sufficiently robust version of the eternalist thesis, which we know to have been essential to his identity as a Peripatetic philosopher. By positing a special simple body impervious to any changes and affections, Critolaus was able to remove the heavens from the cycle of generation and corruption. We cannot say the same for Xenarchus and his revision of Aristotle's physics.

24 On Critolaus, see chapter 1 (Aristotle and the Hellenistic Peripatos).

25 Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.1, 35.5–6 Wachsmuth (= Critolaus, Fr. 16 Wehrli).

26 Epiphanius, *Against All Heresies* [*Panarion*] 3.31.35.

5 The Ps-Aristotelian Treatise *On the Cosmos*

The evidence reviewed so far suggests that some of the most original theses in Xenarchus and Boethus were prompted by a desire to respond to Stoic philosophy. Their strategy consisted in returning to Aristotle in order to find in his writings the conceptual resources to produce an updated version of his philosophy. With this observation in place, I would like to turn briefly to the Ps-Aristotelian treatise *On the Cosmos* [Περὶ κόσμου].

The treatise *On the Cosmos* is one of the most enigmatic works in the Aristotelian corpus. Transmitted under Aristotle's name, it is most likely a post-Hellenistic attempt to fill what was perceived as a lacuna in Aristotle's physical system. This lacuna becomes apparent when we compare this system with the Stoic practice of writing on the cosmos as a whole.[27] Our treatise is the Peripatetic response to this practice. This response consists of a summary of Aristotelian physics and an outline of the causal structure of the physical world, including an attempt to explain the causal role of a transcendent god in preserving and maintaining the cosmos as a whole.[28]

We are not able to date this treatise with precision. We only have a *terminus ante quem* for it: the Latin translation and adaptation attributed to Apuleius of Madaura (second century AD). Hence, we cannot rule out the possibility that our work was written in the first century AD rather than in the first century BC. In fact, it has been recently suggested that the pressures that prompted the production of the Ps-Aristotelian treatise *On the Cosmos* were still felt at the time of Alexander of Aphrodisas (at the end of the second century and beginning of the third century AD). On this suggestion, his treatise *On the Principles of the Cosmos*, which is extant only in Arabic translation, is as another, independent attempt to confront the Stoic practice of writing about the cosmos as a whole.[29]

6 Ethics

It is time to return to Boethus and Xenarchus with a concentration on their views on ethics. Our source of information is Alexander of Aphrodisias, who

27 That this work is a best understood against the Stoic practice of writing about the cosmos was first suggested in Mansfeld 1992. Our ancient sources credit the following Stoic philosophers with a Περὶ κόσμου: Spherus, Chrysippus, Antipater, and Posidonius.

28 A recent translation of this treatise accompanied by essays on the different parts of this work and its subsequent fortunes in the Greek, Syriac, Arabic, and Latin reception of this work can be found in Thom 2014.

29 Kukkonen 2014: 311–352.

reviews the Peripatetic views on the topic of the first appropriate thing in one of the short essays collected in the so-called *Mantissa*. The title of the essay is "[Selections] from Aristotle on the First Appropriate Thing."[30] This title consists of two parts: while one part (on the first appropriate thing/περὶ τοῦ πρώτου οἰκείου) conveys information about the topic dealt in the essays, the other part ([Selections] from Aristotle/τῶν παρὰ Ἀριστοτέλου) tells us that this topic is found in Aristotle's writings. Ancient titles are notoriously problematic. Among other things, it is not clear that they are an original part of the text. Our title is no exception to the rule. Still, it is worth noting that this title does not place an emphasis on the readings that may have been developed by philosophers working within the Aristotelian tradition; rather, it places an emphasis on Aristotle and what can be found in his writings. We can restate this point in a slightly different way. Alexander presents and discusses in his essay evolved out of a creative interaction between the Peripatetic tradition and post-Aristotelian (mainly Stoic) philosophy. Our title, however, tells us that these ideas are not just derived from Aristotle but also found in his writings. It confirms that, at least in the Peripatetic tradition, Aristotle's text was regarded as the official starting point of any serious philosophical reflection. Moreover, it suggests that the ideas presented in this essay are not meant to be a fusion of Stoic and Aristotelian doctrines, let alone a compromise between Stoic and Aristotelian ethics. Rather, they are intended to be an updated version of Aristotle's ethics, validated by what we can read in his ethical writings.

A detailed discussion of Alexander's essay goes beyond the boundaries of this chapter.[31] What matters here is that Aristotle's ethical naturalism is reconsidered in light of the Stoic insight that the starting point of any ethical theory should be the first appropriate thing, which is our first object of desire and what motivates us at the beginning of our life. If we take this insight as our starting point, our task consists in giving an account of how, in the course of our natural development, we enter into the ethical world and become rational agents. At least at first sight, it is far from obvious where we can find in Aristotle the conceptual resources to offer an Aristotelian version of this sort of ethical theory. Xenarchus and Boethus found them in the treatment of friendship offered in books 8 and 9 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.[32] More directly, they made

30 For a critical edition of this text, see Sharples 2008a. A translation of the text can be found in Sharples 2004. Cf. Falcon 2011: 139–155, where the translation of the title adopted by Sharples is disputed.

31 Cf. Inwood 2014: 105–125.

32 Aristotle has left us one ethical theory, which is presented in three ethical collections. They are the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Eudemian Ethics*, and the *Great Ethics*. Xenarchus

love of ourselves the first appropriate thing and identified the first object of desire with love of ourselves.[33]

Xenarchus and Boethus are not the only philosophers to have adopted this approach to Aristotle's ethics. The summary of Peripatetic ethics preserved in Stobaeus, and attributed to Didymus, is another very interesting record of the same phenomenon.[34] Here suffice it to say that this summary is introduced by the title "From Aristotle and the other Peripatetics, on ethics." Clearly, the message is that all the doctrines presented in the summary are to be traced back to, and indeed anchored in, Aristotle. Once again, the intention is not to present an eclectic set of doctrines that mediates between Aristotelian and Stoic ethics, but rather to advance a true interpretation of Aristotle's philosophy.

7 Nicolaus of Damascus

Arguably, along with Andronicus, Boethus, and Xenarchus were the most original Peripatetic philosophers active in the first century BC. But they were not the only ones. We need to review, briefly, the evidence for the others. We begin with Nicolaus of Damascus, adviser and friend of King Herod of Judea and Emperor Augustus, as well as preceptor of the twin children of Cleopatra and Antonius. The *Suda* contains an article on Nicolaus. The ultimate source of this article is Nicolaus' autobiography, where he described himself in the third person as an admirer of Aristotle, attracted by the variety

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and Boethus are among the first to make use of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. For a discussion of the significance of this fact, see Kenny 1978: 1–49.

33 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Mantissa* 151.3.13: "Some say that, according to Aristotle, we ourselves are the first appropriate thing to ourselves. For if the object of love is an object of desire, and we do not love anyone in preference to ourselves, nor are we in an appropriate relationship to something in this way (for it is by reference to ourselves that we both lay claim to other people and love someone), each person would be the first appropriate thing to himself according to this argument. Xenarchus and Boethus are of this opinion, taking their lead from what is said on love in the eight book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where the text begins: "*perhaps clarity about these things could be achieved when the object of love is known*" and up to "*this will make no difference: for it will be what appears to be the object of love*." And in the ninth book, Aristotle similarly says "*the facts are not in agreement with these arguments*" and up to "*so he ought to love himself most of all*."

34 For a full discussion of this summary see chapter 6 (Peripatetic Ethics in the First Century BC: The Summary of Didymus). Philippson 1932 argued that Xenarchus may have been the source of this summary. The dependence of the summary on Xenarchus is defended, with new arguments, in Schmitz 2014.

of his learning—a learning that Nicolaus seems to have pursued as an ideal throughout his life. He seems to have compared learning to a journey, which has various stations and requires stopping for a shorter or longer stay at various places but ends with the return home, which he identifies with the possession and exercise of philosophy.[35] All this fits well with the information we have about Nicolaus, who was best known in antiquity as the author of a universal history in 144 books.

Since Nicolaus described himself as an admirer of Aristotle, and our extant sources remember him as a philosopher even when they refer to his historical work, we may wonder whether we can say something more about his Aristotelianism. A positive answer to this question rests on our ability to identify him with another Nicolaus: a Peripatetic philosopher who is the author of the compendium of Aristotelian philosophy recalled by Simplicius in his commentary on Aristotle's *On the Heavens* 2.3.[36] This compendium, which does not seem to have circulated much in the Greek world, enjoyed considerable success in the Syriac and Arabic traditions. It survives in a fragmentary Syriac abridgment.[37] Silvia Fazzo has recently challenged the traditional identification of the author of the compendium with our Nicolaus.[38] In light of this challenge, we need to review the evidence in favor of the traditional identification.

Let us begin from the reference in Simplicius, which is the only reference to the compendium in the ancient Greek tradition. This reference is

35 *Suda*, s.v. "Nicolaus" (ν 383 Adler): "he became an admirer of Aristotle and was attracted to the variety of his education [. . .] Nicolaus said that education was similar to travel, for just as in travel it happens to those who are away from their home and are undertaking a long journey to lodge and find overnight housing only in some places, and only to stop for food in some places, but in some places to stay for several days, and to take a look at some places on the way, but then to return to their own home to settle there, so, he said, those who are going through the entire course of education must spend more time in some branches, but less time in others, and learn some things in their entirety, but other things in part, and pick up some things at the elementary stage, and having gained possession of what is useful in them, return to their true ancestral home and exercise philosophy" (trans. A. Watanabe, *Suda On Line*, April 1999, http://www.stoa.org/sol-bin/search.pl).

36 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 398.36–37: "Nicolaus the Peripatetic, paraphrasing what is said here in his work *On the Philosophy of Aristotle*, . . ."

37 The Syriac abridgment is preserved in one, badly damaged, manuscript (Cambridge University Library Gg. 2.14). A critical edition, accompanied by English translation, of what remains of books 1–5 is offered in Drossaart Lulofs 1969. A critical edition, plus English translation, of the meteorological fragments from books 6 and 7 can be found in Takahashi 2002: 189–224. Drossaart Lulofs and Poortman (1985: 51–53) have edited the extant fragment from the section on plants (book 7, according to Takahashi).

38 Fazzo 2008: 99–126.

embedded in a discussion of Alexander's reading of *On the Heavens* 2.3. It is virtually certain that Simplicius' ultimate source is the lost commentary by Alexander of Aphrodisias on Aristotle's *On the Heavens*. Recognizing the dependence of Simplicius on Alexander is important because it helps us date Nicolaus and his compendium *before* Alexander.[39] Of course, this does not suffice to rule out the possibility that there are two Peripatetic philosophers, both named Nicolaus from the city of Damascus, who lived before Alexander of Aphrodisias (first half of the third century AD). In fact, it may not be easy to see what the historian who is the author of a universal history and the philosopher who produced a compendium of Aristotelian philosophy could have in common. Still, we should not underestimate what we read in the *Suda*: Nicolaus endorsed, and indeed promoted, a certain ideal of learning—an ideal that he traced back to Aristotle. There is nothing surprising in the fact that someone working with this ideal in mind was able to contribute to various, apparently disconnected, fields of study such as history, ethnography, and philosophy. On the contrary, it was required by his own ideal of learning. More to the point: the compendium of Aristotelian philosophy, as preserved in the abridged and mutilated Syriac version, betrays the same ambition to place a number of wide-ranging investigations into the context of a global study of nature. Briefly, by "philosophy" Nicolaus meant physics and metaphysics (logic, as the tool used by philosophy, is not included in the compendium). The physics that we find in the compendium is not only the theory advanced in Aristotle's *Physics*, but it extended to include a detailed explanation of the physical world. This is the explanation that Aristotle offers in his meteorology and in his study of life (both animals and plants). Clearly, the author of the compendium made an effort to preserve the integrity of what he perceived as Aristotle's original project, and even tried to complete it with an infusion of

39 Confirmation that Alexander knew the compendium and used it in his exegetical work is found also in the prologue to the commentary on book *Lām* of the *Metaphysics* by Averroes, who used Alexander of Aphrodisas and his lost commentary on book *Lambda*. In the so-called prologue to *Lām*, Averroes gives a summary of the contents of the other books of the *Metaphysics* and shows how they possible to the overall argument of the *Metaphysics*. This is presented as a summary of what Alexander of Aphrodisias said by way of introduction to his commentary on *Lambda*. Toward the end of the prologue, Averroes proceeds to criticize the arrangements of the contents of the *Metaphysics* in Nicolaus' compendium. We know that Averroes had access to Nicolaus' compendium (or an abridgment of it), so it is possible that Averroes is juxtaposing Alexander and Nicolaus. However, it is more likely that he found this criticism in Alexander and his commentary on book *Lambda* of the *Metaphysics*. For a translation of Averroes' commentary on book *Lām* of the *Metaphysics*, see Genequand 1984.

material from other sources. We can still see, for instance, how he attempted to integrate Theophrastus' meteorology into Aristotle's project.

Fazzo finds it difficult to believe that the compendium could be dated to the first century BC because its author must have had access to a version of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* that included the second book (*alpha elatton*). But it is safe to assume that Nicolaus intended to produce a summary of Aristotelian philosophy that was based on the best, most up-to-date, knowledge of Aristotle's writings. Moreover, he may have been part of the post-Andronican effort to discover new works by Aristotle. In connection with this, we should also recall the scholium at the end of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*, where we are told that

> Andronicus and Hermippus do not know this book [sc. Theophrastus' *Metaphysics*] for they make no mention of it at all in their list of Theophrastus' books; Nicolaus, though, does mention it in his study of Aristotle's books that come after the *Physics*, saying that it is by Theophrastus.[40]

Nicolaus, the author of the compendium of Aristotle's philosophy, is often described as an orthodox Peripatetic philosopher. A link is tacitly established between his decision to write a compendium and orthodoxy. But it far from clear that the choice to produce such a vast synthesis of Aristotle's philosophy is evidence of orthodoxy. A selective approach to Aristotle was the rule in antiquity. His biology remained at the margins of the return to Aristotle not only in the post-Hellenistic world but also in late antiquity.[41] Against this background, Nicolaus stands out as a remarkable exception. He not only concerned himself with the study of animals and plants but also made an effort to place this study in the context of a causal explanation of the entire cosmos. This captures an essential aspect of Aristotle's original project. Another remarkable aspect of the compendium is the decision to have the summary of the *Metaphysics* right after the condensation of the eight books of the *Physics*. We do not know what motivated Nicolaus to adopt this order, but this arrangement is emphatically not an obvious one.[42]

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40 I am adopting the translation offered in Gutas 2010.

41 For more on this point, see the Introduction to the volume.

42 The impression is that Nicolaus understood τὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ as equivalent to τὰ μετὰ τὰ Φυσικά. The scholium at the end of Theophrastus' *Metaphysics* confirms this impression.

8 Aristo of Alexandria, Cratippus of Pergamon, and Staseas of Naples

The extant evidence for Nicolaus of Damascus confirms that there is no prevalent, let alone dominant, interpretation of Aristotle in the first century BC. Rather, the Peripatetics who were active in this period seem to have developed independent, and to some extent competing, readings of Aristotle. They also seem to have placed an emphasis on different parts of Aristotle's philosophy. With this in mind, we can turn, briefly, to the extant evidence for three other noted Peripatetics of the time: Aristo of Alexandria, Cratippus of Pergamon, and Staseas of Naples.

From Cicero, we learn that Aristo was among the learned men who attended the conversations that took place in Alexandria in 87 BC between Heraclitus of Tyre, a former student of Clitomachus and Philo of Larissa, and Antiochus of Ascalon.[43] Cicero depicts Aristo as a pupil of Antiochus. That Aristo was a pupil of Antiochus finds confirmation in Philodemus' *Index of Academic Philosophers*. There, we are told that Antiochus "took over [the Academy]" (col. 34.34). A list of his students is also given. The list includes the names of Aristus, Antiochus' brother; Aristo and Dio of Alexandria; and Cratippus of Pergamum (col. 35.1–6). A few lines down the same column, we read that both "Aristo of Alexandria and Cratippus of Pegamum deserted the Academy and turned Peripatetic" (col. 35.10–16).[44] A new restoration of this lacunose text has recently been suggested. On this restoration, the defection of Aristo and Cratippus was prompted by the teaching of Xenarchus.[45] Suggestive as it may be, the supplement yielding the name of Xenarchus is highly speculative. There is no independent information that links Aristo and Cratippus to Xenarchus, and the little we know about their activity does not suggest proximity to Xenarchus. The name of Aristo is found in the list of the earliest interpreters of the *Categories*, and a few testimonies regarding his interpretation of the *Categories* are extant. This fits well with what we know for other Peripatatic philosophers of the time whose names are linked to this short but enigmatic work (most notably, Andronicus and Boethus). The case of

43 Cicero, *Prior Academics* 11–12.

44 *History of the Academy, PHerc.* 1021, col. 35.11–16 Dorandi: Ἀρίστων [μὲν] καὶ Κρατ[ίπ]πος ΕΠ[. . . .] ΝΑ[. . . . ἥ]κουσα[ν. . . .]ΗΛΟΙΣ[. . .]ἐγένον[το] Περιπα[τε]τικοὶ ἀ[ποστα]τήσα[ντες τῆς] Ἀκαδεμείας.

45 "Aristo of Alexandria and Cratippus of Pegamum [*having heard Xenarchus and being enthusiastic about him*] deserted the Academy and turned Peripatetic." The restoration is suggested by Enzo Puglia (1998: 142–153).

Cratippus is entirely different. Cicero speaks of him as the leading Peripatetic of his time.[46] Interestingly enough, there is no extant evidence suggesting that Cratippus was critically engaged with any of the Aristotelian works that we have discussed so far. His name is associated with the dialogue *On Philosophy*. This dialogue is now lost, but we know that it played an important role in shaping the Hellenistic reception of Aristotle. Apparently, it continued to exercise a significant influence in the post-Hellenistic period. This adds a new layer of complexity to the reception of Aristotle in the first century BC. While the first century is best known for its critical engagement with school treatises such as the *Categories*, the *On the Heavens*, and the *Metaphysics*, it also registers an interest in Aristotle's most popular works. This is an interest that goes back to Hellenistic times, though it eventually faded. However, it was a gradual process rather than an instantaneous event. Non-technical writings such as the dialogue *On Philosophy* continued to act for quite some time in the post-Hellenistic period as source of inspiration and a focus for allegiance to the Peripatetic tradition.[47]

I conclude this brief survey of the evidence for the Peripatetic tradition in the first century with a few words on Staseas of Naples. Very little is known about him. Cicero tells us that Staseas was the teacher and advisor of Marcus Pupius Piso Frugi Calpurnianus and a friend of Marcus Licinius Crassus.[48] Like Cratippus, Staseas is often presented as an epigone of the Hellenistic Peripatos. While the most original exponents of the Peripatetic tradition were critically engaged with the school treatises, his stance on topics such as happiness, virtue, and the external goods is presented as closer to that defended by Critolaus in the late Hellenistic era. This presentation creates an artificial division within the Peripatetic tradition between two groups of philosophers: while the first group is projected to the future (Andronicus, Boethus, and Xenarchus) the second is anchored in the past (Cratippus and Staseas). We have seen that the situation is far more complex and interesting. All the Peripatetic philosophers of the time were in conversation with Stoicism. They all responded to the theoretical pressures that come from a dialectical interaction with this style of philosophy. However, they did it in distinctive ways. The result is a constellation of different, and in part competing, positions. What these positions have in common is that they all go back to Aristotle. But they do not necessarily go back to the same Aristotle.

46 Cicero, *Timaeus* 1.2; *On Divination* 1.5; *On Obligations* [*De officis*] 1.1–2, and 3.5.

47 Cf. the Introduction to this volume.

48 Cicero, *On the Goals* 5.8 and *On the Orator* 1.104.

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CHAPTER 6

Peripatetic Ethics in the First Century BC: The Summary of Didymus

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1 Didymus and his Work

One of the numerous sources that Ioannes Stobaeus used to compile his anthology of ancient wisdom in the fifth century AD was the work of a certain philosopher named Didymus. Didymus figures as one of Stobaeus' (philosophical) sources in the list of authors provided by Photius in his *Library* (cod. 167.114a). This evidence is supported by a lemma in Stobaeus' *Anthology* [*Florilegium*] 4.39.28 (918.15–919.6 Hense) which is introduced by the words "From the Summary of Didymus" ('Ex τῆς Διδύμου 'Επιτομῆς). Since the part prefaced with these words appears also in the Peripatetic doxography of ethics in Book 2.7 (in the part where the Peripatetic conception of *eudaimonia* is treated), Didymus may be securely identified with the author of the *whole* doxographical piece on Peripatetic ethics entitled *Of Aristotle and the Rest of the Peripatetics on Ethics* (Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν Περιπατητικῶν περὶ τῶν ἠθικῶν).

Since the publication of Diels' monumental work *Doxographi Graeci*, the prevailing hypothesis has been that the author of the Peripatetic and Stoic doxographies in Stobaeus' *Selections* 2.7[1] is Arius Didymus, a Stoic philosopher who lived in the time of Augustus.[2] This Arius Didymus would be the same person as the Stoic Arius who appears in the so-called *index locupletior* of Diogenes Laertius,[3] and as Arius Didymus, the author of an epitome of Stoic philosophy referred to in Eusebius' *Preparation for the Gospel*.[4]

1 All references to Didymus' text are given following the pagination in Wachsmuth 1884. Deviations from Wachsmuth's text, and English translations, follow the forthcoming edition and translation by Georgia Tsouni in Fortenbaugh 2016.

2 See Diels 1869: 80. Diels followed Meineke on this point. Cf. Meineke 1860: CLV. This hypothesis is taken for granted in most modern bibliography after Diels. See Giusta 1964: 81, Moraux 1973: 259, and Hahm 1990: 3047. The only exception known to me is Göransson 1995: 203–218.

3 The *Index locupletior* refers to a lost part of Book 7 of Diogenes Laertius' text. See also the reference to the Stoic Ἄριος in Strabo *Geography* 14.5.4.

4 Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* [*Praeparatio Evangelica*] 15.15.

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Although it has remained unchallenged for a very long time, this hypothesis does not rest on evidence that is beyond dispute. In the *index locupletior*, the Stoic Arius (who on Diels' hypothesis is identical with the writer of the ethical doxography) is not listed as Arius Didymus, but only as Ἄριος. Moreover, this Arius, who was a friend and an advisor of Augustus, was not a Roman citizen, and therefore most probably did not have a Roman cognomen.[5] One could still argue that Eusebius provides a secure basis for the identification of Didymus with the Stoic Arius. However, there is a further complication: while Eusebius recalls Arius Didymus as the writer of an epitome of Stoic philosophy, he mentions only a certain Didymus as the author of a work on the doctrines of Plato (Περὶ τῶν ἀρεσκόντων Πλάτωνι συντεταγμένων).[6] We cannot exclude the possibility that Arius the Stoic philosopher and Didymus the doxographer of the views of Plato are two different persons.

There is also the possibility that "Arius" has been falsely attached to Didymus in Eusebius as a result of a scribal error. An alternative source from the *Suda* makes reference to an Academic philosopher Didymus with the cognomen Ateius;[7] he could provide an alternative authorship for the text, and one which would connect the writer of the epitome with the Academic *milieu*. A connection between the Peripatetic doxography in Stobaeus, the circle of Antiochus, and the revival movement of Aristotelian philosophy in the first half of the first century BC will be argued for in due course. Since I wish to keep the question of the authorship of the text open, I will refer to the writer of the doxography as Didymus, and not, as has been customary until now, as Arius Didymus.

There are two titles attributed to Didymus in Stobaeus. The first is a "Summary" or an "Epitome" (see the lemma Ἐκ τῆς Διδύμου Ἐπιτομῆς in Book 4, chapter 39.28); the second is a work "On Philosophical Sects" (Διδύμου ἐκ τοῦ Περὶ αἱρέσεων in Book 2, chapter 1.17). One may assume that they both refer to a single work, a doxographical summary organized according to schools. In this work, Didymus seems to have collected the views of the most important sects of his time, and most probably those of Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, presumably on all three branches of philosophy, i.e. physics, ethics, and dialectic.[8]

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5 For evidence of Arius' Alexandrian citizenship see Julian's *Letter* 111.39–40.

6 Cf. also a reference by Clement of Alexandria in *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 1.16.80.4 (perhaps to the same Didymus who appears to have written on Pythagorean philosophy as well).

7 *Suda* s.v. "Didymus" (δ 871 Adler) reads as follows: "Didymus bearing the name Ateius or Attius, Academic philosopher. [He wrote] *Solutions of Plausible Arguments* and *Sophisms* in two books. And many other things." (Translation Catharine Roth, *Suda Online*, April 2005, http://www.stoa.org/sol-bin/search.pl.)

8 This corresponds to Diels' reconstruction of Didymus' *Epitome*. Cf. Diels 1879: 72–73.

If the *Epitome* and the work *On Philosophical Sects* refer to the same writing, we may assume that Didymus wrote a single book that contained an epitomized version of the doctrines of the principal philosophical schools on all major areas of philosophy.

The doxographical piece entitled *Of Aristotle and the Rest of the Peripatetics on Ethics* (Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν Περιπατητικῶν περὶ τῶν ἠθικῶν) belongs to the ethical part of philosophy (Περὶ τοῦ ἠθικοῦ εἴδους τῆς φιλοσοφίας) and marks the transition from epistemological to ethical topics. It is the third of three ethical doxographies in a row.[9]

2 An Overview of the Structure and Content of the Peripatetic Doxography

Our doxography attempts to convey all the major points of Peripatetic ethics, including household management and politics, offering what Didymus calls an outline (ὑπογραφήν) of the teaching of the school in these areas. The creation of such an outline requires a criterion of selection from what is available in the sources, and also a criterion for the order of presentation. Thus, while clearly using original sources as a basis, Didymus' contribution lies primarily in the way he chooses and organizes his material into unities in order to convey the Peripatetic view on ethics (and politics), and in the "modern" vocabulary he uses in doing so.

The structure of the doxography is rather loose and the transition from one topic to another does not follow a logical order; Didymus restricts himself to meta-comments that mark the transition to a new topic.[10] However, one can still discern some clusters of themes taken by the doxographer to cover the most important tenets of the school at hand in the domain of ethics. Whereas the first part of the Peripatetic doxography presents doctrines developed in short stretches of arguments, analogies, divisions, and definitions, the second part, on politics, presents the most important "headings" (κεφάλαια) without any attempt to link them in an argumentative way. We cannot be sure whether

9 Hahm (1990: 2945) designates the three doxographies as Doxography A (37.18–57.12), Doxography B (the Stoic doxography, 57.13–116.18), and Doxography C (the Peripatetic doxography, 116.19–152.25).

10 For example, in lines 137.14–15 the doxographer turns to the discussion of virtue as a mean with the comment that "having determined these things, it is necessary to investigate in more detail what is said of moral virtue." Cf. also 139.1–3: "in order to express those things clearly, they thought it was necessary to add to their account things occurring in the soul."

the range of topics has survived in its entirety; with some security, we can say that at least one section, that on emotions, is preserved only in part.

The doxography starts with the main concept of Peripatetic ethics, that of character (ἦθος) and its affinity with habit (ἔθος), upon which follows the basic division of the human soul into a rational and an irrational part. Lines 118.11–119.5 introduce the concepts of a natural propensity toward oneself (οἰκείωσις) and of things according to nature (τὰ κατὰ φύσιν) as the starting-point of ethics. This constitutes an attempt to cast a Stoic idea in Aristotelian-Peripatetic terms, and finds no explicit equivalent in Aristotelian or, more generally, Peripatetic writings; its only parallel is the Peripatetic account in Cicero's *On Goals* 5, which draws on the teaching of Antiochus of Ascalon.[11]

Much like the Antiochean account in *On Goals* 5,[12] the Peripatetic outline claims that desires at the beginning of one's life are directed toward things which relate to oneself (understood as a composite of soul and body). Such objects of desire correspond to the Peripatetic constituents of human happiness; there is thus a correspondence between what is experienced as desirable at the beginning of one's life and what is viewed as intrinsically good in adult life. In the version of the *oikeiôsis* argument at the beginning of Didymus' Peripatetic doxography, humans experience a natural affinity with both their body and their soul, as also with their capacities and activities. Thus, the beginning of the relevant part of the doxography refers to a desire for the preservation of life, bodily integrity, and the experience of pleasure:

> And first of all, they desire existence, for they have a propensity toward themselves by nature (φύσει γὰρ ᾠκειῶσθαι πρὸς ἑαυτόν); that is why they experience a suitable enjoyment among things according to nature and are annoyed by things which are contrary to nature. For they take care to preserve their health and they desire pleasure and strive for life, because these things are according to nature and choiceworthy and good for their own sake (κατὰ φύσιν καὶ <δι'> αὕθ'αἱρετὰ καὶ ἀγαθά). Conversely, they reject and avoid illness, suffering, and destruction because they are

11 An attempt to argue that an *oikeiôsis* theory was developed within the Peripatos is made in Dirlmeier 1937. There is, however, insufficient evidence to ground this thesis. All Peripatetic sources which refer to *oikeiôsis* post-date Stoicism, which seems to have introduced this term to the philosophical vocabulary. It should be noted, however, that the concept of *oikeiôsis* plays no grounding role in the Stoic part of Didymus' doxography. This is perhaps an indication that Didymus used a different methodology when collecting material in the case of the Stoa and the Peripatos.

12 See especially Cicero, *On Goals* 5.24.

> against nature and in themselves to be avoided and evil (τῷ παρὰ φύσιν ὑπάρχειν καὶ δι' αὑτὰ φευκτὰ καὶ κακά). For our body is dear, and our soul is dear, and so are their parts and their capacities and activities dear; in forethought for the preservation of these lies the origin of impulse, appropriate action and virtue (ὧν κατὰ τὴν πρόνοιαν τῆς σωτηρίας τὴν ἀρχὴν γίγνεσθαι τῆς ὁρμῆς καὶ τοῦ καθήκοντος καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς) (118.11–119.4).

The emphasis on life functions, health, and pleasure as an outcome of "a propensity toward oneself" is supplemented in 119.22–124.14 by reference to the tripartite division of goods into external goods, goods of the body, and goods of the soul. The intrinsic choiceworthiness of these three categories of goods is defended on the basis of *oikeiôsis*, i.e. their natural desirability from the moment of birth.

The discussion starts with external goods, focusing in particular on our relations with other human beings. This entails two important ideas. First, that natural affection toward others arises from the relationship of parents with their children and extends gradually outward, encompassing one's relatives, friends, fellow-citizens and, at last, humanity as a whole. The defense of the intrinsic value of other human beings is supported by Didymus on the basis of the existence of a natural relatedness toward others and by reference to the instrinsic social nature of humans. The relevant section of the text reads as follows:

> Since there is such an affection toward the children as being choiceworthy for their own sake, necessarily also parents and brothers and one's wife and relatives and other close persons and fellow-citizens are befriended for their own sake; for we have from nature certain kinds of kinship with them too, for humans are social living beings with affection for each other (ἔχειν γὰρ ἐκ φύσεως ἡμᾶς καὶ πρὸς τούτους τινὰς οἰκειότητας· φιλάλληλον γὰρ εἶναι καὶ κοινωνικὸν ζῷον τὸν ἄνθρωπον). If some of these affective relations happen to be a bit more distant or closer to us, that does not change what we say, as all of them are chosen for their own sake and not only out of need (πᾶσαν γὰρ δι αὑτὴν αἱρετὴν δ' ὑπάρχειν καὶ μὴ μόνον διὰ <τὰς> χρείας). If affection toward one's fellow citizens is necessarily choiceworthy for its own sake, then so is that toward people of the same nation or race and, therefore, also that toward all human beings (120.8–120.20).

The second important idea in Didymus' discussion of social *oikeiôsis* relates to the notion of love of humanity (φιλανθρωπία). According to this, it is appropriate and in line with human nature to help one's neighbors not upon

considerations of merit but due to the fact that they are members of the human race. The appropriate acts are formulated in the doxography by means of rhetorical questions:

> For who wouldn't rescue, if one could, someone who is seen being overpowered by a beast? Who wouldn't indicate the way to someone who is lost? Who wouldn't assist someone who is dying through lack of means? And who, if he came upon a spring in the middle of a waterless desert, wouldn't use signs to reveal its whereabouts to those who travel the same route (121.3–8)?

Since the philanthropic virtue is not discussed in the ethical collections transmitted to us under the name of Aristotle, the material provided by Didymus offers important evidence on the way later Peripatetics integrated this virtue into the list of the other Aristotelian virtues. This section finds important parallels in Cicero's *On Appropriate Actions* [*De officiis*] 1, which relies on Panaetius and his treatise "On Appropriate Action" (Περὶ καθήκοντος) for much of its content.[13] Similarity in the use of examples suggests that Didymus adopted the Panaetian scheme in order to supplement the Peripatetic idea of the intrinsic choiceworthiness of friendship toward other human beings and its importance for the attainment of human happiness.

After the external goods, Didymus turns to the internal goods, which are further divided into bodily and psychic goods. The transition from one topic to the other is enabled by means of successive *a fortiori* arguments. If other human beings are choiceworthy for their own sake, then our own selves are choiceworthy for their own sake as well. If our selves are choiceworthy for their own sake, then the parts of ourselves are choiceworthy for their own sake as well, the most important parts being our body and soul. Didymus defends thereby the idea that we are naturally drawn toward the so-called bodily virtues (σωματικὰς ἀρετάς), e.g. health, strength, beauty, and bodily integrity (122.20–123.1), and that it is reasonable (εὔλογον) to pursue bodily advantages by virtue of their inherent desirability and independently of their utility (123.1–7).

The account culminates with our propensity toward virtue as the primary psychic good, which is again introduced by means of an *a fortiori* argument, this one running as follows. If our body is choiceworthy for its own sake, then our soul is choiceworthy for its own sake as well, and to the highest degree. Equally, bodily virtues find an equivalence in psychic virtues, although the latter have priority over the former.[14] Given that our soul is worthier than the body, our

13 See especially Cicero, *On Appropriate Actions* 1.51. Cf. Dyck 1996: 170.

14 This is again expressed through a row of *a fortiori* arguments. See lines 124.1–124.15.

natural propensity toward the psychic virtues, both theoretical and practical,[15] is greater than that toward the bodily virtues. The *oikeiôsis* of the soul toward itself, its parts, and its virtues is illustrated in Didymus' account as a return of the soul toward itself after being introduced to the bodily and external goods:

> For after virtue was introduced, as we showed, by the bodily and external goods and turned to view itself, because it too belongs to the things which are according to nature much more than the bodily virtues, it became akin to itself as to something choiceworthy for its own sake (ᾠκειώθη πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ὡς πρὸς δι᾽αὑτὴν αἱρετήν) and more so to itself than toward the bodily virtues; therefore, the virtues of the soul are much more valuable (τιμιωτέρας) [than the virtues of the body] (123.21–27).

Subsequently, the account progresses by invoking the idea that there is not only an analogy between the three different categories of goods but also a rationale for the superiority of the psychic goods. The latter are identical with the virtues. They are superior to the bodily and external goods because the soul is superior to, and more authoritative than, the body. Following this, Didymus moves on to the discussion of virtue, offering a definition of it as "the disposition of things in the best way." Reason and emotion are identified as the two principles of the virtues; accordingly, virtue is said to be "the harmony and concordance of the two principles of the soul, the one of them (sc. the rational part) leading to the right destination, the other (i.e. the irrational part) following obediently" (128.11–25).

The following section (starting at line 129.19) addresses the goal of an ethical life (τέλος) and different Peripatetic tenets about human happiness. Didymus gives three post-Aristotelian definitions of human happiness. They attempt to capture the superiority of virtue to the other (non-moral) goods, while granting that bodily and external goods do contribute to happiness and thus belong to the formulation of the highest principle of conduct. These definitions are arrayed in lines 130.18–21:

> Happiness is the "primary use of complete virtue during a complete lifetime" (χρῆσιν ἀρετῆς τελείας ἐν βίῳ τελείῳ προηγουμένην) or "the activity of a complete life according to virtue" (ζωῆς τελείας ἐνέργειαν κατ᾽ ἀρετήν) or "the unimpeded use of virtue among things in accordance with nature" (χρῆσιν ἀρετῆς ἐν τοῖς κατὰ φύσιν ἀνεμπόδιστον).

15 On the *oikeiôsis* of the soul toward (scientific) truth, see 126.1–2.

The first definition employs the "complete virtue" and the "complete life" requirements and supplements them with the word προηγούμενος, which I have rendered as "primary." This addition aims to show that the use of virtue needs, in order for it to be part of a happy life, to be accompanied by non-moral goods, which are denoted by the Stoic formula "goods in accordance with nature" (κατὰ φύσιν ἀγαθά).[16] The "primary use of complete virtue during a complete lifetime" receives in lines 131.14–132.18 an exegetical treatment whereby the expressions "complete virtue," "complete lifetime," and "primary" are discussed and explained from a Peripatetic viewpoint. The idea of complete virtue (τελεία ἀρετή) rests on the distinction between perfect virtues such as justice and nobility (καλοκαγαθία), and imperfect ones, such as good natural endowment (εὐφυΐα) and a progressing state (προκοπή). Didymus clarifies that only the former count as constituents of the chief goal (131.14–20). The third definition in the passage cited above underlines the "psychological" component of the happy life; an obstructed life is one that needs to confront adverse circumstances and the pain associated with them,[17] whereas an unimpeded life is one associated with pleasure.

Although Peripatetics, according to the reconstruction proposed by Didymus, identify virtue as primary for the achievement of human happiness, they hold that extremely unfavourable circumstances may ruin happiness. Accordingly, the noble person may lack happiness, even though he or she will make the best possible use of virtue under even the most adverse circumstances (132.10–15).[18] The expression "middle life" (μέσος βίος), which is introduced in lines 145.6–7, is meant to express the state which occupies a middle space between complete happiness and unhappiness.[19] The middle state stands for the state of the person who, while possessing external goods, has not yet attained full virtue. While this corresponds to the Stoic understanding of the "progressing state," the Peripatetic reading advanced here connects the middle state with the discharge of appropriate actions (καθήκοντα), as the Stoics do not.[20]

16 In Wachsmuth 1884, προηγούμενος in Didymus' account is systematically substituted with χορηγούμενος in order to comply with the surviving Aristotelian treatises on ethics and politics. Although the words are co-extensive in meaning, Wachsmuth misses the point that here Didymus adopts Stoic terminology in order to convey an Aristotelian idea. A defense of the transmitted reading is contained in the preface of Tsouni's edition in Fortenbaugh 2016.

17 See e.g. *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.11, 1100b29–30.

18 Cf. 132.22–133.2.

19 133.6–11.

20 145.6–8.

The following chapter, entitled "How many senses of good there are" (ποσαχῶς λέγεται τὸ ἀγαθόν), contains different divisions of goods which are found not only in Peripatetic treatises but also in Stoic texts. An example is the division of (intrinsically worthy) goods into final and productive goods, whereby the former are identified with "primary actions which are in accordance with virtue," and the latter with the "materials of the virtues" (134.17–19).[21] The list of divisions proposed is loosely connected with a consecutive ἔτι, and it is not explicitly regarded as exhaustive. Another part of the doxography (lines 137.13–142.13) is dedicated to virtue as a mean between two extremes, an excessive and a deficient state. This discussion, like the differentiation between different states of the soul (emotions, capacities, and dispositions) reflects the Aristotelian treatment of this topic, adding to it the post-Aristotelian idea of a moderation of emotions (μετριότης).[22]

The discussion of virtue as a mean draws on a lost Theophrastean treatise on the topic, where Theophrastus, following (according to Didymus) "the lead of his master," used a catalogue of virtues with their corresponding vices.[23] The examples offered are temperance, mildness, courage, justice, liberality, magnanimity, and magnificence. From 145.11 onward, Didymus picks up again the topic of virtues and offers definitions of all major ethical virtues adding to the aforementioned just resentment, dignity, shame, wittiness, friendliness and truthfulness; the list and order of exposition here follows closely *Great Ethics* 1.20, 1190b9–32, 1193a38. The last section (lines 146.15–147.25) contains an even more extended catalogue of virtues containing species of justice (reverence toward the gods, piety, goodness of heart, good fellowship, and fair dealing), of temperance (decency, orderliness, and self-sufficiency), and of courage (stoutness of heart and industriousness). Nobility (καλοκαγαθία) is briefly referred to at the end of the ethical section as the combination of all virtues.

The discussion of virtue as a mean is followed by a section on emotions (142.15–26) and one on forms of life (περὶ βίων) (143.25–145.10). The first section introduces a general classification of emotions as honorable, base, and middle; where honorable emotions like friendship, gratitude, just resentment, shame, and compassion should be chosen at any time, while base ones like envy, malignant joy, and insolence should always be avoided. Middle emotions are identified with fear, grief, pleasure, desire, and anger. They are said to be not *per se* good or bad but emotions that should be held within bounds (142.15–20). Only two of the emotions deemed honorable receive further discussion, namely friendship and gratitude, suggesting perhaps that this part of the doxography

21 A similar division features also in Stoic sources. Cf. *SVF* 3.106–108.

22 138.15–20.

23 140.15–141.2.

has survived in a fragmentary form. The best form of life for the virtuous is said to contain both "the contemplation and the performance of noble things," something expressed also with the concept of a composite (σύνθετον) life. This is thought of as a life in which political and theoretical activity alternate (the life of a teacher being conceived as a combination of the two). If a choice between exclusive forms of life becomes necessary due to circumstance, it is stated that the theoretical life is to be most highly honored but that our social nature draws us toward the political, or practical, form of life. The relevant text reads as follows:

> The virtuous person will choose a life that exhibits virtue whether as a ruler himself, if the circumstances promote him to that status, or if he has to live next to a king or legislate or in any other way be involved in politics. Obtaining none of the above, he will turn to the way of life of an independent citizen or the contemplative life or that of an educator, which lies in the middle. For he will choose both to accomplish and to contemplate noble things. In case he is hindered by circumstances from occupying himself with both, he will become engaged in one of the two, assigning on the one hand a greater value to the contemplative life, but on the other hand, because of his social nature inclining toward political actions (κωλυόμενόν δὲ περὶ ἄμφω γίνεσθαι διὰ καιροὺς θατέρῳ χρήσεσθαι προτιμῶντα μὲν τὸν θεωρητικὸν βίον, διὰ δὲ τὸ κοινωνικὸν ἐπὶ τὰς πολιτικὰς ὁρμῶντα πράξεις) (143.25–144.8).

The epitome closes with a synoptic account of the chief points (κεφάλαια) from the domains of household management and politics.[24] In these two last parts of the outline, Didymus abandons Stoic vocabulary and restricts himself to his Peripatetic sources, and mainly to what has come down to us in Aristotle's *Politics*. The decision to append the headings from the domain of household management and politics to the ethical part of the doxography suggests the intimate link between the two inquires.[25]

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24 As David Hahm (1983: 24) notes, contrary to the Stoic doxography that precedes them, these topics are discussed separately and not in the context of descriptions of the wise man as in the Stoic case.

25 Suggestive of this is the last chapter of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (10.9). For the link between the ethical and the political inquiries, see also *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.2. The inclusion of household management and politics alongside ethics may reflect a division of practical philosophy into ethics, economics, and politics (found also in Alcinous' *Handbook of Platonism* [*Didaskalikos*] 3.3 and Diogenes Laertius 5.28).

3 Relation to Original Peripatetic Sources

The title *From Aristotle and the Rest of the Peripatetics on Ethics* suggests that Didymus entertained a "loose" conception of Aristotelian authority; although he evidently traced the views he outlined back to Aristotle, he took them to be representative of the whole Peripatetic tradition as well. With regard to his Peripatetic sources, Didymus seems to have drawn on heterogeneous materials.[26] This accounts for the differences in style found in its individual parts. We may assume that Didymus made use of ethical treatises not only of the two authorities he cites, namely Aristotle and Theophrastus, but also of textbooks circulating within the Peripatetic school.[27] A significant amount of material that we find in the doxography (especially in the sections on human happiness and virtue as a mean) maps onto what can be found in the school treatises transmitted under Aristotle's name, namely the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Eudemian Ethics*, and the *Great Ethics*.

In most cases, Didymus introduces this material with a verb in the third person plural, saying that "they," i.e. the Peripatetics, "assume" (ὑπολαμβάνουσι, ὑπέθεντο, φασίν), and an infinitive which transfers the direct speech of the original source into a report, as is usual in doxographical texts. Didymus' references include short *verbatim* quotations, such as the material in section 137.24–138.8, which contains much language taken from *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.2, 1104a11–19, or the definition of ethical virtue in lines 140.12–14, which quotes *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.6, 1106b36–1107a2.[28] In some cases, Didymus signals the use of original works with a reference to the ancients (ἀρχαῖοι), as in line 131.2, where there is reference to a definition of the goal of an ethical life (τέλος). We also find longer paraphrases conveying the meaning of the original with slightly altered formulations. An obvious example of this practice can be found in 137.15–138.26. Here Didymus follows very closely the train of thought expressed in *Great Ethics* 1.5, 1185b1.38, altering only slightly his source. Also, in 134.8–137.12, Didymus imitates the style of *Great Ethics* 1.2, 1183b18–1184a40 on the many senses of the predicate "good." The part of the doxography referring to virtue as a mean clearly makes use of a lost Theophrastean treatise. Finally, the section

26 Cf. Moraux 1973: 276.

27 However, the claim of von Arnim (1936: 12–14) that Didymus derived his material *solely* from an old Peripatetic school textbook does not seem to be justified.

28 140.12–14: "That is why virtue is 'a disposition concerned with choice lying in the mean relative to us, this being defined by reason and as the practically wise person would define it'."

on economics and politics draws on what has come down to us as the *Politics* of Aristotle and closely follows its wording and structure, summarizing a selection of its main topics under compressed headings.

4 Didymus' *Outline of Peripatetic Ethics* and Antiochus in Cicero's *On the Goals* 5

Both Didymus' text and the Antiochean account in Cicero's *On Goals* 5 constitute post-Hellenistic attempts to offer a synoptic presentation of Peripatetic ethics. Due to profound similarities in their approach, a common authorship has been suggested for both texts.[29] This seems *prima facie* justified. Both texts constitute attempts to reconstruct the system of thought of the Peripatetic school (or, in the case of Antiochus) of the "Academic" tradition, which includes the Peripatos as well.[30] The attitude toward ancient authority in both texts is not exegetical; they both assume that the tradition they reconstruct should be measured against contemporary terminological innovations and standards of systematization.[31]

Important similarities between the two accounts may be explained as the result of a Stoicizing influence on the presentation of the material and the wording adopted. A Stoic feature common to both accounts is the adoption of the methodological starting point of a natural propensity toward oneself (*oikeiôsis*) as a foundation for the discussion of ethics.[32] However, this should not lead us to think that either Didymus or Antiochus created an eclectic account that

29 Strache 1909.

30 Suggestive is the use of the characterization "ancients" in both texts to refer to the authorities whose thought they reconstruct. See 129.4–6: "The choiceworthy and the good seemed to be the same thing to the ancients" (τὸ δ' αἱρετὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν ταὐτὸν ἐδόκει *τοῖς ἀρχαίοις* εἶναι); cf. 131.2–4: "But we should follow the custom of the ancients and say that the end is 'that for the sake of which we do everything but it for the sake of nothing' " (ἀκολουθητέον μέντοι *τῇ τῶν ἀρχαίων συνηθείᾳ* καὶ λεκτέον τέλος εἶναι «οὗ χάριν πάντα πράττομεν αὐτὸ δὲ οὐδενός). Antiochus refers to the ancients (*antiqui*) as well, and labels his school "Old Academy" (*vetus Academia*). Cf. Cicero, *On Goals* 5.7.

31 The way Peripatetics of the first century BC participated in larger philosophical debates that went beyond Aristotelian concerns is further pursued in chapter 5 (Aristotelianism in the First Century BC).

32 It is suggestive of the Stoic origin of the concept that in lines 120.3–4 we find an example of social *oikeiôsis* featured also in the Stoic account in Cicero's *On Goals* 3.65. An attempt to trace a theory of *oikeiôsis* in Aristotle's text was undertaken after Didymus and

falsified Aristotelian, or more generally Peripatetic, philosophy. Rather, they attempted a reconstruction of this philosophy by employing Stoic terminology. Thus, both Didymus and Antiochus defended, on the basis of *oikeiôsis*, a pluralistic value system which included virtue, contrary to the Stoic view that there is only one moral value. In line with this, their conception of *oikeiôsis* centered on the tripartite division of goods which were deemed "according to nature." Both argued that we value these goods from the beginning of our lives and that there is a correspondence between this natural value and the recognition of the intrinsic worthiness of the relevant goods on the part of the rational agent. One needs to notice that Didymus stressed an aspect of *oikeiôsis* that is absent in Antiochus, namely the affinity toward pleasure. In the case of Didymus, *oikeiôsis* is additionally conceptualized according to the Aristotelian metaphysical scheme of *energeia* and *dynamis*.

On the level of philosophical terminology, both accounts make ample use of vocabulary which is very prominent in Stoic texts and which most probably found its origin in the Stoic school.[33] See, for instance, the use of terms such as "propensity toward oneself" (οἰκείωσις), "appropriate action" (καθῆκον), "selection" (ἐκλογή), "right action" (κατόρθωσις),[34] "indifferents" (ἀδιάφορα), as well as the concept of the things "according to nature" (κατὰ φύσιν). Additionally, Didymus makes use of analytical tools known from the Stoic tradition in order to clarify points in Peripatetic doctrine. An example of this practice is the use of προηγούμενος and κατὰ περίστασιν, which in Stoic texts suggests a distinction between things that have a higher selective value and things that are chosen only under certain circumstances respectively. In some cases, Didymus signals terminological distinctions that may not be found in the original texts but reflect the philosophical practice of his time. In one case, he points to the way the ancients included the notion of choiceworthiness into their concept of the good (τὸ δ' αἱρετὸν καὶ ἀγαθὸν ταὐτὸν ἐδόκει τοῖς ἀρχαίοις εἶναι). In another, he distinguishes between the ancients and those who introduce terminological differentiations "for the sake of the exactness of names," alluding in this case to the Stoics and their differentiation between goal (τέλος) and objective

Antiochus also by the early commentators Xenarchus and Boethus. See the section on ethics in chapter 5 of this volume.

33 Similarity in vocabulary between the two texts has already been noted by Strache (1909: 5). Cf. also Diels' hyperbolic statement in connection with the ethical doxography by Didymus: "*stoicae disciplinae non guttae sed flumina inmissa sunt*" (1879: 71).

34 For the use of the verb κατορθοῦν in Stoic ethics, see e.g. Stobaeus 2.99.3–8.

(σκοπός); according to this distinction, the realized goal is expressed through infinitives, whereas substantives stand for its causes and objectives.[35]

Although Didymus was clearly influenced by Stoic ideas when formulating the views of the Peripatos on ethics, the hermeneutical principle guiding him was that the ancients often grasped philosophical concepts even when they lacked the vocabulary to express them. Thus, the use of a Stoic (or Stoicizing) vocabulary should not lead us astray into thinking that the intention of the author was not to accurately convey the meaning of the ancient tradition.[36] Such Stoicizing tendencies are best understood as attempts to modernize or update the presentation and adopt the most advanced conceptual distinctions of the time.[37] The use of Stoic vocabulary also served polemical purposes, as suggested by the treatment of topics that had gained a distinctive importance in the Stoic tradition. The justification of suicide in Didymus is a case in point (126.5–11): the representatives of the Peripatos were presented with the need to develop their own views on certain topics in response to the Stoics.

Beyond the engagement with Stoicism, the treatment of both Aristotle and Theophrastus as equal authorities in both Didymus and Antiochus is suggestive of a derivation from a common *milieu* and most probably reflects a time before the edition of Andronicus had acquired canonical status. Still, on one issue, Didymus departs clearly from Antiochus. On the question whether virtue is sufficient for happiness, an issue which had become central in Stoicism, Didymus sides with the view that extremely adverse circumstances may ruin happiness. This view is ascribed to Theophrastus in Cicero's *On Goals* and is viewed as a heterodox position there.[38] By contrast, Didymus' doxography contains a clear defense of the Theophrastean position, suggesting that the doxographer took a closer look at the evidence in the original treatises. A clear

35 130.21–23: "If being happy is the goal, happiness is said to be the objective" (εἰ δὲ τὸ μὲν εὐδαιμονεῖν τέλος, ἡ δ' εὐδαιμονία λέγεται σκοπός).

36 As in the case of Antiochus, Didymus has also been condemned as a "contaminator" of Aristotelian philosophy. For instance, Charles Kahn (1983: 8) connects anachronism of vocabulary with that of doctrine.

37 I refer the reader to chapter 5 of this volume for more examples of this tendency.

38 Cicero, *On Goals* 5.12: "This is especially shown by the work of Theophrastus about happiness, in which a large influence is allowed to luck, though if his statements were true wisdom would not have the power to ensure happiness. This is in my opinion a softer and, if I may say so, more effeminate view than is required by the power and dignity of virtue. So let us cleave to Aristotle and his son Nicomachus, whose carefully written treatise on character is indeed reputed to be by Aristotle, but I see nothing to prevent the son from having been like the father."

statement of the position that virtue is not sufficient for happiness is contained in the following passage:

> The activity of virtue is (in the definition called) "primary," as it is altogether necessary for it to be surrounded by goods which are in accordance with nature; for the morally good person could make a noble use of virtue even among evils but will lack supreme happiness, and even tormented could show a high-born character, but will fail to attain happiness. The reason is that virtue in itself produces only noble things, whereas happiness both good and noble (132.9–15).

The association of Didymus with Antiochus has important consequences for the dating of our text as well. Both Didymus and Antiochus reflect an attempt to reconstruct Peripatetic thought after the revival of interest in the school treatises of the two primary heads of the Peripatos. Still, Didymus diverted in his reconstruction of Peripatetic ethics from Antiochus since he attacked the idea that happiness may be secured amidst misfortune. As Andrea Falcon notes in the previous chapter, the adoption of different, and often competing, interpretations of Aristotle is one of the most interesting features of the Peripatetic tradition in the first century BC.

A polemical engagement with Critolaus speaks also for a dating of our text to the first century BC. Critolaus is counted in the first part of the doxography among the "younger Peripatetics." Didymus' account contains polemical remarks against his view that happiness consists in the completion (συμπλήρωμα) of all categories of goods.[39] *Contra* Critolaus, Didymus defends the primacy of virtue for the achievement of human happiness and grants to the bodily and external goods only the role of productive factors (ποιητικά). Against his presentation of the goal of an ethical life as a complex whole constituted equally by all three categories of goods, Didymus defends the view that only virtuous actions constitute proper parts of the good, life being a sort of "activity of the soul." By his lights, external and material goods as necessary means to the performance of virtuous actions contribute to the achievement of the ultimate goal but should not be considered proper parts of it, belonging to a different ontological category; life is constituted by actions but none of the

39 Critolaus' followers are counted among the younger Peripatetics (ὑπὸ δὲ τῶν νεωτέρων Περιπατητικῶν τῶν ἀπὸ Κριτολάου) in 46.10–13. For Didymus' polemic against Critolaus' conception of the *telos*, see 126.14–16 and 126.23–25.

bodily or external goods is "either an action in itself or an activity at all."[40] The relevant passage reads as follows:

> If the agent uses certain things for the fulfilment of his purpose, we shouldn't consider these parts of the activity, although each one of the crafts mentioned needs each thing, not however as a part but as productive of the craft. The things that are necessary for any kind of action shouldn't be called parts of the activity; for the part is thought of as completing the whole (συμπληρωτικόν), whereas the necessary things (are thought of) as productive (ποιητικόν), because they conduce and contribute toward the end (130.4–130.11).

All in all, the Stoicizing influences both in the terminology and in the analytical tools used in the doxography, the polemical instances, and the joint references to Aristotle and Theophrastus point to the middle of the first century BC as for a plausible time for the writing of the text. Although there are similarities in the way Didymus and Antiochus reconstructed the Peripatetic position, Didymus betrays a closer acquaintance with the original sources. This is reflected in the way he quotes from them. Furthermore, on one issue, the sufficiency of virtue for a happy life, Didymus and Antiochus take different stances, with Didymus representing the "orthodox" Peripatetic teaching. We may assume that with his choice of texts and topics the doxographer aimed to offer an overview that in his mind would accurately represent Peripatetic doctrine in the domain of ethics.

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40 126.22–127.2.

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CHAPTER 7

Aristotelianism in the Second Century AD: Before Alexander of Aphrodisias

Inna Kupreeva

1 The School and its People

The second century AD sees a revival of Aristotelianism. Its culmination is the activity of Alexander of Aphrodisias whose monumental literary legacy provided later commentators with an authoritative school reading of Aristotle. Presence of Aristotelian ideas is also perceived in the works of philosophers of other schools, such as Stoics, Platonists, and Epicureans, who debate with Peripatetics,[1] and outside school philosophy, in scientific and medical writings such as the works of Galen and Ptolemy, where we find both adaptation and criticism of various Aristotelian doctrines. Peripatetic philosophy is popular with the Roman elite.[2] Its ideas and characters make it to the jokes of urban wits.[3]

Still, despite all these signs of revival, a detailed history of the Peripatetic school is not easy to trace. Late Neoplatonic sources name Andronicus of Rhodes and Boethus of Sidon as the last Peripatetic διάδοχοι (successors), and there is no extant record of successions for the Imperial period.[4] The process of

1 Stoics: Cleomedes, *Lectures on Astronomy* 1.1.81; Platonists: Atticus frr. 4, 5, 7 Des Places; Epicureans: Diogenes of Oenoanda fr. 5 cols. 1.11–3.1.

2 The people Galen describes as Peripatetics include, apart from Eudemus and Alexander of Damascus, who were teachers, also two consuls (at different times), Flavius Boethus and Severus, and the prefect of the city Sergius Paulus (see *On Prognosis* [*De praecog.*] XIV 605–613 and 624–630 K; *My Own Books* [*Lib. Prop.*] XIX 11–16 K; *Anatomical Procedures* [*De anat. admin.*] II 215–216 K).

3 E.g. Lucian, *Demonax* 56.

4 Elias, *On Aristotle's Categories* 113.19–20 and 117.22 mentions Andronicus as the eleventh "successor" after Aristotle; Ammonius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 31.12–13 names Boethus as the "eleventh after Aristotle" (not using the term "successor"). The difference may have to do with the method of counting (whether Aristotle is included). The source of these reports may be the catalogue of Aristotle's works attributed to a Ptolemy al-Gharīb, which in turn contains some earlier school material (see Kupreeva forthcoming).

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decentralization of philosophy underway already in the late second century BC[5] reaches its climax in the crises of the first century BC when the classical successions in Athens are broken, not to be restored until the second half of the 1st century AD, in a very new socio-economic context of the Roman rule. We have some remains from the work of Peripatetic philosophers active in the first century AD, namely Aristocles of Messene (*ca*. 50 BC–50 AD), whose circumstances are not known, but no Athenian connection has been attested, and Alexander of Aegae, Nero's teacher at Rome.[6] We have very little information about the Athenian school until Marcus Aurelius' edict of 176, which gave state endowment to the four chairs of philosophy in Athens: Peripatetic, Platonic, Stoic, and Epicurean.[7] Alexander of Aphrodisias, in the proem to his treatise *On Fate* addressed to the emperors Septimius Severus and Caracalla (AD 198–211) speaks of himself as appointed teacher of Aristotelian philosophy, and after the publication of the Aphrodisias' inscription we are now in a position to speak of Athens as the location of his school and chair.[8]

Most of our evidence for Peripatetic doctrines before Alexander of Aphrodisias is contextualized in philosophical commentaries, mostly on Aristotle, and on one occasion (Adrastus) on Plato's *Timaeus*. The main source for Peripatetic philosophers of this age—Adrastus, Aspasius, Herminus, Sosigenes, Aristotle the Younger—is citations in the later commentary tradition. The earliest extant commentary on Aristotle, Aspasius on *Nicomachean Ethics*, also belongs to this period. It is natural to suggest that the commentary was becoming the way of doing philosophy. It is more difficult to tell, without further evidence, whether the lost commentaries took the form of line-by-line discussion of Aristotle's text, or selected notes, or that of a monograph devoted to a particular topic. Even a reported discussion of Aristotle's work is a commentary. In using the word "commentary," I am not making any suggestion about the form of the literary work.

Adrastus of Aphrodisias. His dates are so far uncertain, apart from his *floruit* before AD 193 based on Galen's reference to Adrastus' commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*.[9] Adrastus' works included also the treatise *On the Order*

5 Sedley 2003.

6 See Chiesara 2001: XIX–XX.

7 Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 82.31.3.

8 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Fate* 164.14–15. On the inscription, see Chaniotis 2004 and Sharples 2005.

9 Galen, *My Own Books* XIX 42.10–43.1 K. Cf. Moraux 1984: 295n9, Sharples 1990a: 6n28.

of Aristotle's Writings,[10] commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics*,[11] on Theophrastus' *Characters* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*[12] and on Plato's *Timaeus*.[13]

The remains of the treatise *On the Order of Aristotle's Writings* show the continuity of Peripatetic interest in the study of Aristotle's work as a system of philosophy, of composition and structure of the *corpus aristotelicum*. According to Simplicius, Adrastus ordered the logical corpus by increasing certainty: from the mostly descriptive *Categories* and the *Topics* which operates with dialectical reasoning to the rigorous theories of demonstration and syllogism in the *Analytics*.[14]

Aspasius. His *floruit* before or around 143/4 is based on Galen's report.[15] Aspasius must postdate the Platonist Eudorus of Alexandria (second half of the first century BC),[16] and also Alexander of Aegae, since he apparently took over his interpretation of a passage from Aristotle's treatise *On the Heavens*.[17] Alexander of Aphrodisias reports that he found the explanation given in the seminar by Herminus also in Aspasius' commentary on Aristotle's *On the Heaven*.[18] Aspasius' commentary on *Nicomachean Ethics*, books 1–4, 7, and 8 is

10 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 4.12; *On Aristotle's Categories* 16.2; 18.16.

11 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 122.3–125.9.

12 Athenaeus, *Sophists at Dinner* 15.673 E–F.

13 See Porphyry, *On Ptolemy's Harmonics* 96.1–6 Düring; cf. ibid. 7.24–8.5. Many excerpts quoted by Theon of Smyrna and Calcidius, as well as Achilles Tatius and Proclus (Moraux 1984: 298 and n17, Petrucci 2012).

14 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 15.30–16.13; 18.16–21. On this work as evidence of the activity of organization of the Aristotelian corpus beyond the first century BC, see chapter 4 (Andronicus of Rhodes and the Construction of the Aristotelian Corpus).

15 "At this time [*ca*. 143/4] another fellow-citizen of ours returned from a long stay abroad, a pupil of Aspasius the Peripatetic, and after him another from Athens, an Epicurean. For my sake my father examined the way of life and doctrines of them all, going to them with me" (*The Diagnosis and Treatment of the Affections and Errors Peculiar to Each Person's Soul* [*De an. aff. dign. et cur*.] 8 = V 42.1–5 K).

16 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 59.6–8.

17 Aristotle, *On the Heavens* 2.6, 288b22–27.

18 Alexander of Aphrodisias *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 430.32–431.11.

extant. Lost commentaries include *On Aristotle's Interpretation*,[19] *Categories*,[20] *Physics*,[21] *Metaphysics*,[22] *On the Heavens*,[23] *On the Senses*.[24]

Sosigenes is described by Alexander as his teacher.[25] We do not possess any further prosopographical information about him. He had a typically broad range of interests, from logic to philosophy of nature. The works attributed to him include commentaries on *Categories*,[26] *Prior Analytics*,[27] treatises *On Counteracting Spheres*[28] and *On Sight*,[29] which contained at least eight books.

Herminus. Alexander of Aphrodisias refers to Herminus as his teacher.[30] Lucian reports a joke made about Herminus by Demonax, whose dates are roughly 80–175/180.[31] In Alexander's treatise on motion against Galen preserved in Arabic a certain *'rmyws* is mentioned as an addressee of Galen's letter containing criticisms of Aristotle's theory of motion. Shlomo Pines emended

19 All *testimonia* for this commentary are found in the two editions of Boethius' commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*. Boethius' main source is Porphyry who probably draws on Alexander of Aphrodisias' lost commentary).

20 Galen, *My Own Books* XIX 42.10–43.1 K.

21 The main source is Simplicius' *Physics* commentary. See also Moraux 1984: 235–9.

22 *Apud* Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 41.21–28; 58.31–59.38; 378.28–379.3.

23 Alexander of Aphrodisias *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 607.5–7. Cf. n. 18 above.

24 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's On Senses* 9.24–10.6.

25 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Meteorology* 143.13; cf. Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 61.23.

26 Our source for Sosigenes' commentary is Dexippus, who most likely draws on the lost commentaries by Porphyry and Iamblichus (see Dillon 1990: 9–15).

27 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 126.20–22, [Ammonius], *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 39.24.

28 See Proclus, *Exposition of Astronomical Hypotheses* 4.98 (130.17–23 Manitius); cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 505.1–11.

29 See Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 61.23; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Meteorology* 143.12–14; cf. Sharples 2010a: 26D.

30 Alexander of Aphrodisias *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 430.32–33: Ἑρμίνου δὲ ἤκουσα.

31 Lucian, *Demonax* 56: "Herminus, he said, you truly deserve ten accusations" (ἄξιος εἶ τῶν δέκα κατηγοριῶν).

'rmyws to *'rmnws* suggesting that Herminus was Galen's addressee.[32] Herminus commented in some form on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*,[33] *Categories*,[34] *Prior Analytics*,[35] *Topics*,[36] *On the Heavens*.[37]

Aristotle the Younger (*Aristotle of Mytilene* (?)). Several ancient texts mention Aristotle the teacher of Alexander. They include Simplicius' commentary on Aristotle's *On Heavens*,[38] two passages in Cyril of Alexandria,[39] and the treatise *On the Intellect*, from the school collection (*Mantissa*) attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias.[40]

A tradition going back to the Humanist textual criticism replaced the reading Ἀριστότελης in these texts with Ἀρίστοκλης. It was argued that in the treatise *On Intellect* the reading Ἀριστοτέλους, taken to refer to Aristotle of Stagira, is chronologically impossible and therefore should be changed to Ἀριστοκλέους.[41] This has been conclusively refuted after the studies by Paul Moraux and Paolo Accattino drew attention to the fact that the teacher of Alexander by the name of Aristotle is mentioned as clearly distinct from Aristotle of Stagira in the texts of Alexander himself and later Aristotelian commentators.[42]

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32 Pines 1961: 23. It is unclear whether Herminus is identical with Galen's Peripatetic teacher, a student of Aspasius (n. 15 above), as suggested by Marmura and Rescher (1965: 1), doubted by Moraux (1984: 362–3).

33 Reported by Ammonius and particularly Boethius, who says that Herminus wrote his commentary (Boethius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 293.27–294.4). Both probably draw on Alexander's lost commentary on *On Interpretation*.

34 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 1.14. See Moraux 1984, 364–365; Griffin 2009, 340–341.

35 See Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 72.26–74.6; 89.30–90.6; [Ammonius], *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 39.31–40.1.

36 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Topics* 569.3–5; 574.22–26.

37 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 380.3–5 and 430.32–431.11.

38 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 153.16–18: "Alexander set out the text in a general way, after his teacher Aristotle, as he says, in the following way" (συνῃρημένως δὲ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος, ὥς φησι, κατὰ τὸν αὑτοῦ διδάσκαλον Ἀριστοτέλην οὕτως ἐξέθετο τὴν λέξιν).

39 Cyril of Alexandria, *Against Julian* 2.596A: "Now, Alexander the pupil of Aristotle writes in this way in *On Providence*" (γράφει τοίνυν Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ Ἀριστοτέλους μαθητὴς ἐν τῷ περὶ προνοίας οὑτως); and ibid. 5.741: "And at any rate Aristotle's pupil Alexander says in the treatise on providence concerning particulars" (καὶ γοῦν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλους μαθητὴς Ἀλέξανδρος ἐν τῷ περὶ καθ' ἕκαστα προνοίας λόγῳ φησίν).

40 Alexander of Aphrodias, *Mantissa* 110.4: "I heard on intellect from without from Aristotle" (ἤκουσα δὲ περὶ νοῦ τοῦ θύραθεν παρὰ Ἀριστοτέλους).

41 Nuñez n. 26 at 73–74, Zeller 814n1, Heiland 1925: 1, 16–23 (= Testimonia III–V).

42 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 166.18–21: "[Aristotle] himself proved that causes cannot be infinite proceeding in this way; and our own Aristotle

Thus, it can be considered as established that Alexander had a teacher called Aristotle. That this Aristotle had a cognomen "of Mytilene" is a scholarly conjecture identifying Aristotle the teacher of Alexander with Aristotle of Mytilene mentioned by Galen in *On Habits* as "a man in the forefront of Peripatetic study" (that is the only reference to this full name in the Greek corpus to date).[43] The Younger Aristotle commented in some form on *Aristotle's On Heavens* and the *Metaphysics*, and it has been suggested (although there is still no consensus) that he is the author of some parts of the theory of intellect presented by Alexander in his treatise *On the Intellect*.

This brief overview of philosophers and their work gives us an initial idea of a broad range of subjects taught and discussed in Peripatetic schools in the second century AD, from logic to philosophy of nature, to psychology and ethics. As we shall see in the selective survey of the teachings, much of the Peripatetic discussion in this period is motivated by the search for doctrinal consistency between different works of Aristotle. At the same time, it will be clear that the Peripatetics active in the second century AD in keeping up with the school tradition of open-mindedness are ready to introduce new theories into the traditional Peripatetic curriculum.

2 Logic and Ontology

In the second century AD logic and ontology gain a special significance in Peripatetic curriculum in general, providing conceptual framework to all

himself too sketched out a proof to this effect" (αὐτὸς μὲν οὕτως ἐφοδεύσας ἔδειξεν ὅτι μὴ οἷόν τε ἄπειρα εἶναι τὰ αἴτια· ὁ δὲ ἡμέτερος Ἀριστοτέλης καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπιχειρῶν ἐδείκνυεν). Syrianus, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 100.6–7: "The younger Aristotle, the commentator of Aristotle the Philosopher, being wary of this, said that the philosopher meant the other way around" (ὃ δὴ καὶ εὐλαβηθεὶς ὁ νεώτερος Ἀριστοτέλης ὁ ἐξηγητὴς τοῦ φιλοσόφου Ἀριστοτέλους, ἀνάπαλιν ἔφη λέγειν τὸν φιλόσοφον); Elias, *On Aristotle's Categories* 128.10–13: "That not only Aristotle the Stagirite was so called, but there were also other Aristotles in his own time, such as the gymnastic master also called "Story," and after that, as the teacher Alexander; for he ought to have been since he was as it were the second Aristotle" (ὅτι οὐ μόνος Ἀριστοτέλης ὁ Σταγειρίτης οὕτως ἐκαλεῖτο ἀλλὰ καὶ ἄλλοι Ἀριστοτέλεις ἐγένοντο ἐπὶ αὐτοῦ, ὡς ὁ παιδοτρίβης καὶ ἐπίκλην Μῦθος, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα, ὡς ὁ διδάσκαλος Ἀλέξανδρος· ἔδει γὰρ αὐτὸν οἷον δεύτερον ὄντα Ἀριστοτέλην.) The text is problematic, and Moraux suggested that Elias' source must have read ὁ διδάσκαλος Ἀλεξάνδρου instead of ὁ διδάσκαλος Ἀλέξανδρος. See Moraux 1967 and 1985, Accattino 1985. Cf. Moraux 1942: 143–9.

43 Galen, *On Habits* 11.4–12 Müller (= Sharples 2010a, 12), Moraux 1967. In the treatise written during the rule of Marcus Aurelius, Galen describes as a recent event this philosopher's illness and death, so we would have the *terminus post quem non* as AD 180.

fields of study, from logic and metaphysics to natural and moral philosophy. The discussions of theories of meaning and essence show continuity with the agenda set by the earlier commentators on the *Categories*.

Thus Adrastus draws on the *Categories* to explain Aristotle's criticism of Parmenides in *Physics* 1.3, which says that "it is necessary for him [i.e. Parmenides] to assume not only that 'is' has the same meaning, of whatever it is predicated, but that it means what just is (ὅπερ ὄν) and what is just one (ὅπερ ἕν)."[44] Adrastus distinguishes two classes of things: (a) subjects (ὑποκείμενα) and (b) things that belong to the subjects and are predicated of them. Subjects in the strict sense are Aristotle's πρώται οὐσίαι ("this man," "this stone"), but in a broader sense the subject can mean any subject of predication.[45] Adrastus further distinguishes between two types of predication: "synonymous," when predication expresses the essence of the subject, and "accidental," when the predicate is accidental rather than essential. The former kind corresponds to the case when the subject can be said to be ὅπερ the predicate: "Socrates is a rational mortal animal" is a synonymous predication because Socrates is just this, "rational mortal animal."[46] Adrastus then distinguishes the accidents that are constantly inherent in the subject, such as Socrates' snubnosedness, from those that are removable, such as "sleeping" and "walking." The accidental predicates, either removable or constant, cannot become a part of synonymous predication. Even if Socrates' snubnosedness is his constant concomitant, it is not a part of the definition. With regard to Aristotle's analysis of Parmenides' thesis, Adrastus explains that since according to Parmenides being is one, there is no subject of which it could be predicated accidentally; so understood in this way being will always be said to be ὅπερ ὄν and ὅπερ ἕν, since it is the only possible subject of both these predications. "Being" can work as accidental predicate only if the plurality of beings is allowed.[47] Adrastus' *Categories* commentary seems to have produced a robust conceptual framework for more sophisticated discussions of subjecthood and essence.

Peripatetic commentators of the second century AD discussed the opening of *On Interpretation*, which Andronicus saw as inauthentic: "And just as written marks are not the same for all men, neither are spoken sounds. But what these are in the first place signs of—affections of the soul—are the same for all; and what these affections are likenesses of—actual things—are also the

44 Aristotle, *Physics* 1.3, 186a32–34.

45 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 123.2–9.

46 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 123.10–124.1.

47 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 124.33–125.9.

same."[48] Herminus finds the problem with Aristotle's sameness thesis since it fails to account for the cases of ambiguity,[49] so he weakens it, reading "these" (ταῦτα) instead of "the same" (ταυτά).[50] In this form, the thesis describes the psychological mechanism of signification: words are tokens for soul's affections while these latter are likenesses of things. Herminus' approach to the interpretation of this passage seems in agreement with the theory of signification which informs his interpretation of the *Categories*, where he also is arguing for the direct application of categories to the kinds of being, no special role reserved for the concepts.[51]

Herminus' discussion of *differentia* may be a part of the same anti-conceptualist strategy in his ontology. Herminus does not consider the so-called constitutive *differentiae* to be *differentiae* in a proper sense, and wants to retain this title only for the divisive *differentiae*.[52] Thus, the *differentiae* "ensouled" and "perceiving" are not proper with respect to the genus "animal," whereas the *differentiae* "rational" and "irrational" are, insofar as they divide the genus into species.[53] Herminus' interpretation of *Categories* 3, 1b15–16, where Aristotle says that the *differentiae* of the two genera not subordinate to one another are different in kind (ἑτέραι τῷ εἴδει) seems consistent with this view. Aristotle means that the *differentiae* of two *unrelated* genera (e.g. "living being" and "knowledge," to use Moraux's example) are different in kind.[54] Herminus takes the meaning of the passage to be that the two kinds not subordinate to each other but subordinate to a common genus, such as "winged" and "footed," may have some *differentiae* in common, such as "biped" and "quadruped," and these respective *differentiae* will be different in kind (εἴδει) in the two subordinate genera, although identical in their relation to the superordinate

48 Aristotle, *On Interpretation* 1, 16a5–8: καὶ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ γράμματα πᾶσι τὰ αὐτά, οὐδὲ φωναὶ αἱ αὐταί· ὧν μέντοι ταῦτα σημεῖα πρώτων, ταὐτὰ πᾶσι παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ὧν ταῦτα ὁμοιώματα πράγματα ἤδη ταὐτά. Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 160.28–161.1; Ammonius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 5.28; 7.13.

49 Boethius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 39.25–40, 1 (= Sharples 2010a: 11E *partim*).

50 At both 16a6 and 16a8. None of this should be seen as frivolous: both readings are attested in the textual tradition.

51 Cf. Moraux 1984: 375; Ebbesen 1981: 159; Griffin 2012; Griffin 2015: 203.

52 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 55.22–23.

53 Moraux suggests that Herminus here follows Boethus who argued that the *differentiae* are not subordinate to genus, but to species because they belong to all members of species, but not to all members of genus (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 97.28–34, Moraux 1984: 368).

54 Moraux 1984: 368.

genus.[55] This view, which makes *differentia specifica*, a part of the definition of a given species, dependent for its ontological characteristics on the species being defined, is criticized by Alexander of Aphrodisias in the treatise *De differentiis specificis* preserved in Arabic.[56]

3 Cosmos: Heavens, Planets, and Providence

Cosmology is a traditional Peripatetic subject. In the second century special attention is given to the questions of the nature and pattern of planetary motions, in light of the new astronomical material. The discussion of providence, which became a part of Peripatetic agenda in the Hellenistic period, remains important as well.

3.1 *Regularity of Heavenly Motion*

The question of the nature of heavenly motion came to light already in the first century BC, when Xenarchus of Seleucia criticized Aristotle's theory of aether.[57] In the first century AD Alexander of Aegae, and in the second century AD Aspasius and Herminus, discuss Aristotle's argument for the regularity and constant speed of the heavenly motion in *On the Heavens* 2.6.[58]

Aristotle's argument consists in a refutation of all possible cases where the motion of the first (outermost) heavenly sphere would not be at a regular speed, but would be either (i) slowing down for an infinite time and after that accelerating for an infinite time; or (ii) either only slowing down for an infinite time or only accelerating for an infinite time; or (iii) alternating between acceleration and deceleration.[59] Herminus, Aspasius, and Alexander of Aegae are cited by Alexander of Aphrodisias in connection with the refutation of the first of the three options. Alexander of Aphrodisias says that these earlier commentators were unaware of the tripartite structure of Aristotle's argument and took the option (i), whereupon if heavenly motion is irregular, then either its acceleration or its deceleration will have to take place infinitely, to be a separate argument. Aspasius, followed by Herminus, paraphrases the argument as saying that (a) a deceleration of the heavenly motion means that the slower

55 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 57.22–58.7.

56 See on this Rashed 2007: 104–126.

57 See chapter 5 (Aristotelianism in the First Century BC) for Xenarchus of Seleucia and his criticism of this theory.

58 Aristotle, *On the Heavens* 2.6, 288b22–27.

59 Aristotle, *On the Heavens* 2.6, 288b22–289a8.

motion follows upon the faster motion, and (b) just as the slower motion will have to continue in infinity because there is no power to restore the incapacity of the first mover that lapsed into the deceleration, (c) in the same way the faster motion that always precedes the slower motion, will continue as faster motion in infinity, and the infinite deceleration will be the slowing down of the faster motion that is faster in infinity. (d) This, however, involves an impossibility: the faster motion which is in accordance with nature will have an equal (viz. infinite) duration with the slower motion which is contrary to nature. (e) Hence, the deceleration cannot take place.[60] Several key points of Aspasius' interpretation (there is no source from which to restore the power of the first mover if the latter is weakened and the acceleration being natural as a manifestation of power is superior to deceleration which is a weakness and thus counternatural for the first mover) are borrowed from the interpretation of Alexander of Aegae.[61]

Herminus also commented on Aristotle's argument that heavenly motion is eternal, effortless, and not necessitated by any external constraint.[62] Herminus' view is presented as a reply to what looks like a school problem to do with a tension in Aristotle's explanation of heavenly motions, which seems to appeal to both the properties of the heavenly body, αἰθήρ, and the thesis that heavens are ensouled: "We inquired, [Alexander of Aphrodisias] says, when we got to this part of the second [book of *On the Heavens*], with what movement the soul moves the body that moves in a circle, if it moves in a circle by its nature. The enquiry is necessary and most certainly deserves to be set as a problem; we must consider the solutions. Julianus of Tralles' opinion was that the soul was responsible for its movement being to the right and even and orderly. Herminus said that the soul was responsible for its moving to infinity; for no finite body possesses, by its own nature, a power of movement to infinity."[63] The approach taken in the school to resolve this tension apparently involves the explanation of different functions of heavenly bodies by different

60 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 430.32–431.11.

61 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 430.12–21 (= fr. 145a Rescigno *partim*). "[Alexander of Aphrodisias] gives the interpretation mentioned previously, that the slowing down must necessarily be infinite because there is nothing to restore the power of the prime mover and rectify its loss of power, as [being] that of Alexander of Aegae." Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 430.27–33 (= fr. 145a Rescigno *partim*). Rescigno suggested that the commentary was delivered in oral form in seminars, where Aspasius might have been attending (Rescigno 2004: 58–61).

62 Aristotle, *On the Heavens* 2.1, 284a15–b5.

63 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 379.32–380.5 (= Rescigno fr. 129d12–22). Cf. Sharples 2010a: 21J. See also Sharples 2002: 4.

causal factors.[64] Herminus refers to the soul for the explanation of the infinite character of heavenly motion alluding to Aristotle's demonstration that the infinite power cannot reside in a finite body.[65] Alexander objects to Herminus' account that it is the prime mover that is responsible for the infinite character of the heavenly motion. This suggests, as Rescigno points out, that Herminus treats the heaven as a complete self-moving entity constituted by a mover, which is the soul, and the moved, which is its body.[66] This solution, although it does generate problems with regard to the role of final causation, might have been dictated by desire to eliminate tension between the explanation of heavenly motion in *Physics* and in *On the Heavens*, so once again the question of doctrinal consistency is linked to the question of consistency between the texts of the corpus.

3.2 *Planetary Motions*

Aristotelian theory of planetary movements presented in *Metaphysics* 12.8 and based on concentric models of Eudoxus and Callippus was considered outdated already by Hellenistic astronomers because it could not account for a number of phenomena such as the varying size of planets and the retrogradations. Theon reports a view that considers the motion of planets to be voluntary ("chosen and unforced") and criticizes "all the philosophers who unite the planets with the spheres as if [the planets] were inanimate and introduce multiplicities of spheres for the circlings [of the planets], as Aristotle thinks it right to do, and of the astronomers Menaechmus and Callippus, who introduce some [spheres] that carry [the planets], others that unwind [these]."[67] Adrastus, in his *Timaeus* commentary, seems to introduce some significant modifications into Aristotle's concentric theory. He replaces it with the model based on the idea of epicycles that goes back to Apollonius of Perga. According to Adrastus, each planet is attached to a solid sphere whose diameter is set between the lower and upper concentric spheres (centered at the center of the universe still). The motions that describe the motion of the planet are as follows: (a) the westward motion of the sphere of the fixed stars around the axis perpendicular to the celestial equator; (b) the eastward, or slower westward (Adrastus says that both hypotheses can explain the appearances), motion of the concentric hollow sphere around the axis perpendicular to the plane

64 Sharples 2010a: 191.

65 Aristotle, *Physics* 8.10, 266a24–b27.

66 Rescigno 2008: 144, cf. Moraux 1984: 398; Bodnár 1997: 190n1.

67 Theon of Smyrna, 201.20–202.2 Hiller. The text is attributed to Adrastus himself in Sharples 2010a: 21N. But cf. Petrucci 2012: 14 and n. 49.

of planet's path along the ecliptic circle, and (c) the regular westward motion around its own center of the small solid sphere inscribed in the hollow sphere, i.e. the epicyclic motion proper. Adrastus says that the planet completes a full epicycle "either [i] in a time equal to that in which the hollow [sphere] of the planet [either] goes round the [sphere] of the fixed [stars] travelling in the opposite direction or is left behind [by one complete revolution], or [ii] more quickly, or [iii] more slowly."[68] The case [i] corresponds to the motion which has no retrogradations, such as that of the sun and the moon. In both other cases, [ii] and [iii], we can observe the "irregularities" of planetary motions. The epicyclic motion of the planet means that its distance from the earth varies, and its path is not concentric with the system of spheres, but eccentric. Adrastus recognizes this, but says that eccentricity is an accident rather than an inherent feature of planetary motion.[69]

Sosigenes in his monograph *On the Counteracting Spheres* (Περὶ τῶν ἀνελιττουσῶν), discusses both the concentric theory and the theory that introduces the epicycles and eccentric spheres, pointing out the rationale for each theory and the difficulties they incur. In the end of his discussion, he possibly proposed some sort of a synthetic theory combining the strengths of both alternative approaches. Paul Moraux suggested the following reconstruction of the structure of Sosigenes' work. The treatise opens with the introductory chapter that contains *inter alia* an important piece of evidence coming from Eudemus' *History of Astronomy* concerning Plato's program of theoretical foundations of astronomy and the task he set for the astronomers.[70] The first part of the treatise was devoted to the exposition and criticism of the concentric systems of planetary motion (Eudoxus, Callippus, Aristotle); the second part dealt with the more recent theories of epicycles and eccentrics. From Simplicius' report it is clear that Sosigenes' main concern is that concentric systems fail to "save the φαινόμενα," such as the inequality of planetary distances from the center of the earth, multiply attested in ordinary experience (he mentions changing of the size by Venus and Mars which "in the middle part of their course appear many times bigger," with use of measuring devices, and from observation (here the occurrence of annular-shaped solar eclipses is cited).[71]

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68 Theon of Smyrna, *On Mathematics Useful for Understanding Plato* 181.12–182.25 Hiller (= Sharples 2010a: 21M).

69 Theon of Smyrna, *On Mathematics Useful for Understanding Plato* 184.5 Hiller (discussion in Sorabji 2007: 581–583).

70 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 488.18–24 (= Sharples 2010a, 21L); for Sosigenes' use of Eudemus, see Zhmud 2006: 230–237.

71 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 504.17–506.3. Cf. Sharples 2010a: 21K.

It is remarkable that Sosigenes apparently wants to exempt Aristotle himself from these criticisms of the concentric theory when he says that the problem of inequality of sizes is raised by Aristotle himself in the *Natural Problems*.[72] In support of this apologetic move, he cites the text from *Metaphysics* 12.8: "For now we say what some of the astronomers say, in order to give an idea, so that there may be some definite number [of movements] to grasp in one's thought; but for the future we must make our own investigations into some things and enquire about others from those who investigate them, and if anything contrary to what has been now said should be apparent to those who deal with such matters, we should respect both parties, but believe those who are more accurate."[73] This may give us an idea of the way Sosigenes is hoping to reconcile Aristotelian astronomy with the post-Aristotelian developments. In particular, it is important that he takes Aristotelian doctrine to be open to revision in light of new facts and arguments and that he takes it to be a necessary part of the method to give a proper hearing to all parties in the discussion.

Simplicius also reports Sosigenes' objections against the theories of epicycles and eccentrics. Having summarized both hypotheses and remarked that they are simpler and preserve the phenomena better than the concentric theories, Simplicius goes on to cite the criticisms which he attributes to Sosigenes.[74] Sosigenes points out that the μεταγενέστεροι do not preserve Aristotle's principle according to which each body moving in a circle must move around the center of the universe.[75] Further, the new theories apparently violate Aristotle's principle of balance, according to which the single outermost sphere of the cosmos carries indefinitely many fixed stars, whereas in the region closer to the center each planet is carried by several spheres.[76] Simplicius then cites the replies to both these objections; it is not clear who the respondent is, but we cannot rule out the possibility that some material of the replies comes from Sosigenes' discussion of the difficulties which he conducts in his preferred form of *in utramque partem*.

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72 As Sharples explains, there is no such evidence in the extant collection of the *Problems* (Sharples 2010a: 186n15).

73 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 12.8, 1073b11–17 (= Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 505.30–506.3). As Sharples notes, "the form of the quotation is . . . tendentious, for it gives the impression that it reflects doubts on Aristotle's part about the theory of concentric spheres itself, whereas Aristotle's passage relates specifically to the number of the heavenly movements" (Sharples 2010a: 186n17).

74 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 509.16–19.

75 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 509.19–21.

76 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 509.22–26.

3.3 *Providence*

Adrastus' views on providence, from what little evidence we have, seem to be in line with the position attributed in the sources to Critolaus, according to which divine providence does not extend beyond the realm of heavenly bodies.[77] Commenting on the *Timaeus*, Adrastus says that the way the processes in the sublunary cosmos are caused by the heavenly bodies does not need to be understood in the sense that heavenly bodies exist for the sake of the sublunary world, but can be understood "on the basis that the former are always as they are on account of what is finest and best and most blessed, while things in our world follow them accidentally."[78] This formulation is close to the way Aristotelian position is stated in Aëtius 2.3.4 (cf. 22H Sharples), but Adrastus provides some further details about the nature of the accidental link between the upper and the sublunary cosmos. It seems to be explained in the first instance by the location of the sublunary cosmos around the center of the universe, which makes the whole sublunary world a part of the necessary condition of heavenly rotation. Adrastus attributes to necessity some further characteristics of the sublunary cosmos, namely the location of earth in the lower and fire in the upper parts of this cosmos, and the intermediary location of water and air between the two extreme elements. He also says that change is due to necessity because the matter of the sublunary things is changeable and has opposite potencies in it: this change is said to be brought about by the complex motion of planets. Presumably, the necessities which characterize the sublunary world depend on the motion of the ecliptic circle, which accounts for the change of seasons, the most global form of elemental change. A similar position is developed and argued in greater detail by Alexander of Aphrodisias.

4 Intellect

One of the most influential theories that came from the school of Alexander, the theory of intellect, owes some of its inspiration to the discussion of Aristotle's theory by the Peripatetics of the second century AD. In the school treatise *On the Intellect* [*De intellectu*] attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias,

77 Critolaus as preserved in Epiphanius, *Against the Heresies* [*Panarion*] 3.508.4–15 Holl (=fr. 15 Wehrli. Cf. Sharples 2010a: 22O).

78 Theon of Smyrna, *Mathematics Useful for Understanding Plato* 149.4–150.4, Hiller (= Sharples 2010a: 22I2).

we find a report of the doctrine of a certain Aristotle,[79] who says that the reasons that moved the Stagirite to develop the doctrine of the intellect from without included the analogy with sense-perception, where sense objects that cause sensation exist in actuality, and the general principle according to which in order for something to come to be from potentiality to actuality, there has to be a cause that exists in actuality and which can bring the potential X to the state of actual X (110.4–24 = B1).

The object of thought of our intellect is sensible things, none of which is intelligible in actuality, but only in potentiality. In the activity of human intellect, two operations are distinguished: the production of the intelligible by abstraction and the apprehension of these intelligibles when they are already produced.[80] Our intellect is assisted in this activity by the intellect which is "by nature" and "from without," which is the only thing that is intelligible in its own nature. It is immortal and its role is to produce the disposition in the material intellect which enables it to think.[81]

This account is followed by a report of the original response by Aristotle of Mytilene to the critics of the Peripatetic doctrine of the "intellect from without,"[82] who pointed out that νοῦς θύραθεν cannot either be in a place or move from one place to another,[83] and by implication, cannot make a contact with the human intellect which is material. Aristotle of Mytilene responds to this by explaining that νοῦς θύραθεν is present "in matter as a substance in a substance, in actuality, and performs its activities always."[84] Whenever the divine intellect comes across the right kind of elemental mixture which produces a body capable of having a thinking disposition, it produces the human disposition to thought. In these cases the divine intellect acts as a craftsman working with an instrument, whereas at other times, when bodies present no suitable matter, it acts as a craftsman in accordance with his craft but without instruments. The criticism is probably coming from the second century AD

79 Paul Moraux and Paolo Accattino take him to be Aristotle of Mytilene (Moraux 1985, Accattino 1985 and Accattino 2005); Opsomer and Sharples 2000 argue that the part of the report at 110.4–112.5 may be a paraphrase of the doctrine of Aristotle of Stagira by the author of the treatise *On the Intellect*. Sharples (2010b: 152) points out that the two parts of the argument (110.4–112.5 = Sharples 2004 B, and 112.5–113.12 = Sharples 2004: C1) may come from two different sources.

80 *On the Intellect* 111.15–18 (= Sharples 2004: B2 *partim*).

81 *On the Intellect* 111.29–32.

82 *On the Intellect* 112.5–113.12 (= Sharples 2004: C1).

83 *On the Intellect* 112.6–8.

84 *On the Intellect* 112.11–12.

Platonist Atticus.[85] The Peripatetic reply attributed to Aristotle of Mytilene has a number of Stoicizing elements: the idea that intellect pervades matter, that human thinking depends on the divine intellect meeting with the right 'blending' of the bodies, and even the comparison of the suitable bodily disposition as 'fire or something of that sort' (112, 12).

The author of the treatise *On the Intellect* (perhaps Alexander himself) criticizes the theory of his master.[86] His objections are: (i) according to this theory the divine intellect is found in the basest things (this is also the Stoic view) (113.12–14); (ii) according to it, the divine intellect and providence are present in the sublunary world, even though the right (presumably, Peripatetic school) view is that providence in sublunary world comes about in accordance with relation of things here to the heavenly motions (113.14–16; the view goes back to Critolaus); (iii) on the view presented by this theory, our thinking is not up to us (μὴ ἐφ'ἡμῖν) and not our own function (ἔργον), but is a condition and activity of the potential and instrumental intellect produced by the divine intellect directly as we come to be (113.16–18). These are typical anti-Stoic objections, with Stoics explicitly mentioned in (i). The author of the treatise concludes by offering his own solution to Atticus' objection, different from the one given by his teacher. But this argument attributed to Alexander's teacher shows that the idea of interpreting the active intellect of *On the Soul* 3.5 as external is already present in the school tradition prior to Alexander's own influential interpretation. We can notice also that the expression νοῦς θύραθεν, clearly used technically in the report, comes from *Generation of Animals* 2.3, 736b28–29 and indicates that this account of the active intellect is based on a synthetic reading of the Aristotelian corpus.

5 Ethics

Ethics also belongs to traditional Peripatetic subjects. From the first century BC, we have a number of Peripatetic texts and reports which show how the systematization of Aristotelian doctrines takes place side by side with the appropriation of new themes from the Hellenistic agenda.[87]

Our main source for Peripatetic ethics in the first half of second century AD is Aspasius' extant commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, books 1–4

85 Cf. fr. 7.75–81 Des Places; Donini 1974: 51; Rashed 1997: 189–91; Accattino 2001: 55.

86 *On the Intellect* 113.12–25 (= Sharples 2004: C2).

87 See chapters 5 (Aristotelianism in the First Century BC) and 6 (Peripatetic Ethics in the First Century BC: The Summary of Didymus).

and 7–8, which is also the earliest extant commentary on Aristotle. Aspasius discusses the question of the place of ethics in the study of philosophy and argues that from the point of view of necessity, the study of ethics has a priority over theoretical philosophy, even if in the absolute sense theoretical philosophy is prior. One must first educate one's character before continuing to further studies, since otherwise, if one's rational power is overcome by emotions, it is difficult to make accurate judgements. He points out that this position is supported in the tradition by both Socrates and the Pythagoreans, none of whom could be suspected of neglect toward the cultivation of 'divine' theoretical subjects, and yet both started by teaching morality.[88] Aspasius is here proposing the third of the three Peripatetic positions with regard to the starting point of the study of philosophy mentioned in the later ancient sources, the other two being Andronicus (one should start with logic) and Boethus (one should start with physics).[89]

Defending Aristotle's view that external goods are necessary for happiness, Aspasius engages with both the Stoics who deny this (being committed to the thesis that virtue is sufficient for happiness) and Critolaus, the Peripatetic scholarch of the second century BC who taught that happiness is completed by the three kinds of goods, namely goods of the soul, goods of the body, and the external goods.[90] According to Aspasius, external goods are necessary for happiness (contrary to the Stoic view); however, they are necessary not as parts or as things that complete it but rather as instruments (contrary to Critolaus).[91] Aspasius explains Aristotle's claim in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.7, 1097b16–20 that happiness is the most choiceworthy not as a part of reckoning adducing the argument from *Topics* 3.2, which establishes that ends are not included in the same counting with their means.[92]

Aspasius examines the meaning of Aristotle's claim in *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.2 that "each emotion and each action is accompanied by pleasure and pain, and therefore virtue has to do with pleasures and pains."[93] Some unnamed philosophers understood that this meant a division of all emotions (πάθη) into

88 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 2.5–11 (discussion in Karamanolis 2011).

89 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 5.33–34. Cf. Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 5.16–34 and chapter 5 of this volume.

90 Critolaus *apud* Stobaeus, *Selections* 2.7, 46.6–9 (= fr. 19 Wehrli), Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 2.31.129.10, 1–3 (= fr. 20 Wehrli), discussion in Sharples 2007: 627–9.

91 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 24.3–4.

92 Aristotle, *Topics* 3.2, 117a18 (discussion in Sharples 2007: 632).

93 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.2, 1104b14–16: παντὶ δὲ πάθει καὶ πάσῃ πράξει ἕπεται ἡδονὴ καὶ λύπη καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἂν εἴη ἡ ἀρετὴ περὶ ἡδονὰς καὶ λύπας.

the two highest genera, pleasure and pain, and these latter would subsume all the particular emotions.[94] Aspasius says that this approach has credibility, but also runs into several difficulties, which he offers to overcome before arriving at a very similar classification of his own. First, there is a problem of relation between the generic pleasure and pain and particular pleasures and pains (such as the pleasure taken in the well-being of oneself and one's friends, and pain experienced on account of some misfortune). The latter will have a status of species not being different from the genus in either definition or name. The solution Aspasius apparently recommends is that the definition of pleasure ("unimpeded activity in accordance with nature") should apply to the generic pleasure, and the specific pleasures should be derived by *diairesis* constructed using the method of *ekthesis*, i.e. each specific emotion being treated as a particular example of a genus.[95] A further problem has to do with the states which involve a combination of pleasure and pain, such as desires (ἐπιθυμίαι). Aspasius may be thinking of various mixtures of pleasure and pain discussed in Plato's *Philebus*. In order to resolve these problems, he suggests turning to the definition of emotion (πάθος), in order to see that perhaps the suggested division into the two genera and many species is optimal. Here Aspasius cites and criticizes the definitions of πάθος given by the Stoics and earlier Peripatetics. The Stoic definition "vehement impulse or irrational impulse contrary to the right reason" is criticized on the ground that not every emotion is vehement and not every emotion is contrary to the right reason.[96]

The definition of Andronicus, "emotion is an irrational movement in the soul on account of a supposition of something bad or good, taking irrational not in the Stoic sense of "contrary to the right reason," but as referring to this part of the soul"[97] is criticized for the inclusion of the word "supposition" (ὑπόληψις), which Aspasius seems to interpret as Stoic term "assent" (συγκατάθεσις).[98] He points out that many emotions come about on the basis of appearance alone, without a mediating assent, and some even come about on the basis of pleasure alone, without a mediating appearance.[99] Boethus' definition of emotion, "irrational movement of the soul with a certain magnitude"[100] is designed to exclude any movements "that are not

94 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 42.27–32.
95 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 43.11–14.
96 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 44.12–19.
97 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 44.21–24.
98 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 45.2.
99 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 45.1–10.
100 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 44.24–25.

long-lasting appropriations and alienations."[101] Aspasius retains the core formula of both earlier definitions of emotion, suggesting his own as "motion of the irrational part of the soul caused by pleasure or pain" (45.13–14). The striking feature of Aspasius' account of emotion its anti-cognitivism, as Richard Sorabji noticed.[102]

Aspasius' overall philosophical position does not lend itself to an easy classification. In the *Ethics* commentary, we find arguments that make it closer to the Stoics, such as denying the degrees of virtue.[103] Even more frequent are overlaps with middle Platonic theories, notably, in the points where these theories are close to the Aristotelian position.[104] Still, Aristotelianism prevails, both in the overall conceptual framework of the commentary and in the background: Aspasius' familiarity with Aristotle's doctrines and arguments and especially the application of the doctrines from across the corpus in the discussion of ethical problems, point to his Peripatetic allegiance.

6 Conclusion

The surviving texts and reports show continuing engagement of the Peripatetic philosophers of the second century AD with a philosophical agenda set by Hellenistic and post-Hellenistic philosophical school as well as growing interest in the new scientific discoveries and theoretical developments. The general aim of such engagement, as seen in several examples considered above, is most typically to establish, review, defend, or rationalize the Aristotelian position in light of new theoretical challenges. The most striking feature of this period, not documented before, is a thorough and detailed knowledge that all the Peripatetic philosophers have of the Aristotelian corpus. Most often dialectical engagement with problems or criticisms happens in the course of interpretation of an Aristotelian text or argument, and search for solution usually mobilizes the full theoretical arsenal of Aristotle's logic and ontology, whether the problem under discussion belongs to physics, logic, or ethics, to use the Hellenistic classification. The prevalence of Aristotelian method and Aristotelian ontology in all these areas puts Hellenistic agenda in a new perspective. This is the same approach that is documented much more fully in the work of Alexander of Aphrodisias, and it is possible to say that it has been formed during the second century AD.

101 Aspasius, *On Aristotle's Ethics* 44.27–28.

102 Sorabji 2007: 623; cf. Sedley 1999.

103 Ierodiakonou 1999.

104 See Donini 1974, 1982, and 2005.

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CHAPTER 8

Alexander of Aphrodisias

Cristina Cerami

1 Life and Work

The information we have about the life and philosophical activity of Alexander of Aphrodisias is surprisingly scanty. It consists of what Alexander tells us in the dedication at the beginning of his *On Fate*, where he presents himself as a teacher appointed to a state-endowed chair of Aristotelian philosophy by emperors Septimius Severus and Antoninus Caracalla (*On Fate* 1.18–2.2). Since the latter ruled together from 198 to 209, this dedication allows us to date his philosophical activity to the late second and early third century AD.

An honorary inscription recently found at Karacasu in modern southwestern Turkey (about 10 km from the old city of Aphrodisias in Caria) casts some light on his social origin and philosophical career. The inscription goes as follows: "by a vote of the council and the people, Titus Aurelius Alexander, philosopher, [one] of the successor [to the philosophical headship] at Athens, [set up this statue of] his father, Titus Aurelius Alexander, philosophers."[1] This inscription is quite important. First, it confirms that Alexander held his appointment as a professor of Aristotelian philosophy in Athens. Second, it gives us Alexander's full name and, in so doing, sheds new light upon his social origins. The name Titus Aurelius, borne both by the father and the son, implies that the family was awarded Roman citizenship by emperor Antoninus Pius (Titus Aurelius Fulvus Antoninus) when he was holding the office of governor of Asia in AD 135/136. Finally, the inscription tells us that Alexander's father was a philosopher too. In several works, Alexander informs us that he attended the lectures of Herminus and Sosigenes. It is also likely that Aristotle of Mytilene was one of his teachers.[2] This inscription suggests that his first introduction to philosophy took place in his homeland and that his father had a role in it.

Our Greek, Arabic, and Latin bibliographical sources attribute a great number of writings to Alexander. Not all of them are authentic. Among the authentic ones, the treatises *On Mixture, On Fate*, and *On the Soul* are extant in the original Greek. Some writings are preserved only in Arabic translation. Among

1 Chaniotis 2004: 377–414. I am adopting the translation offered in Sharples 2010: 19.

2 Moraux 1984: 399–401. Cf. Moraux 1985: 266–269.

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them, there are the treatises *On the Principles of the Cosmos, On Providence*, and *Against Galen on Motion*. Moreover, Alexander wrote philosophical commentaries on several Aristotelian works. His commentaries on the *Prior Analytics* (book 1), *Topics, Meteorology*, and *On the Senses* are extant. His commentaries on the *Posterior Analytics*, on the *Physics*, and on the treatise *On the Heavens* survive only in fragmentary form.[3] A complete commentary on the *Metaphysics* is transmitted under his name, but only the first five books are genuine. Finally, his philosophical production included concise expositions on particular exegetical questions prompted by the text of Aristotle's writings or linked to questions debated by other contemporary philosophical schools. These expositions are collected in three books of *Natural Questions*, one book of *Ethical Questions*, and a book that is traditionally known as *Mantissa* ("makeweight"), which is concerned with psychology.

A complete presentation of Alexander's philosophical production would go beyond the limits of this chapter. In the pages to follow, I will try to assess Alexander's unique place in the Aristotelian tradition by singling out what is distinctive in his reading of Aristotle.

2 The Neo-Aristotelianism of Alexander of Aphrodisias

Alexander is without doubt the most prominent figure in the reception of Aristotle in antiquity. His work as a teacher (*On Fate* 1.18–2.2) or, as he also says, as an ambassador (*On the Soul* 2.3–6) and a herald (*On Fate* 164.14–15) of Aristotelian philosophy, constitutes a milestone in the Peripatetic tradition. Recent studies have shown that his philosophical production must be considered a coherent project to be evaluated in the perspective of ongoing philosophical debates inside and outside the Peripatetic school. As we will see, Alexander designs his own reading of Aristotle in order to answer not only competing philosophical systems but also alternative interpretations of Aristotle. From this point of view, Alexander's philosophy is essentially linked to the historical and philosophical context that preceded him. For several reasons, however, Alexander's philosophical position constitutes a turning point with respect to the preceding Peripatetic tradition. In light of this, it is not inappropriate to speak of Alexander's philosophical project as a form of Neo-Aristotelianism.

3 Collection of extant testimonies in Moraux 1979 (*Posterior Analytics*), Rescigno 2004 and 2008 (*On the Heavens*), and Rashed 2011 (*Physics* 4–8).

In order to evaluate this suggestion and fully grasp its implications, I propose to consider the case of the cognate expression "Neo-Platonism." This expression is a recent coinage that goes back to German historians working in the circle of the eighteenth-century historian Jacob Brucker (1696–1770). The pros and cons of this historiographical label and the periodization that it implies have been much discussed recently. The debate has focused not only on the philosophical and historical pertinence of the term "Neo-Platonism" but also on the use of "Middle Platonism," introduced by Karl Praechter to designate the Platonists from the first century BC until Ammonius Saccas. Scholars who are not comfortable with these labels stress that none of the thinkers considered as Middle or Neo-Platonists would have agreed to call themselves anything other than Platonists. They also point out the danger of an uncritical use of these expressions, and notably the risk of considering the thinkers that fall under these labels only in relation to Plato's philosophy.

The great majority of specialists, however, agree now that the third century AD marks a caesura in the Platonic tradition. Several historical and philosophical features characterize this turning point. At the turn of this century, Platonism becomes the only protagonist of the philosophical scene. It assimilates and integrates the achievements of the other philosophical schools and rearranges the structure of the whole philosophical discipline into a new system. Metaphysics and theology become the dominant interests. Cosmology, epistemology, and ethics are absorbed into metaphysics and theology. The application of a vertical emanative scheme, entailing the existence of different levels of reality, is taken to be at the core of Plato's philosophical system, and thus to be involved in any defensible reading of his texts.

I would like to suggest that Alexander marks a similar turning point in the Peripatetic tradition. I hasten to add that the historical and doctrinal reasons behind these two phenomena are not the same. And yet there are analogies that justify the use of the expression "Neo-Aristotelianism" with regard to Alexander's appropriation of Aristotle's philosophy. I speak of Neo-Aristotelianism not only because Alexander institutes a new way of reading Aristotle, but also because his distinctive Aristotelianism would be transmitted to the Arabic tradition where it would be adopted and adapted by philosophers who placed themselves in the wake of Greek philosophy.

Not surprisingly, the expression "Neo-Aristotelianism" is largely absent from the historiography of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Alexander is usually included under the more general heading of "Aristotelianism" or "Peripatetic Tradition." This does not mean, however, that scholars do not recognize the novelty of his reading of Aristotle. Quite the opposite: the very title of the still useful overview offered in Sharples 1987 singles out this

aspect of Alexander's contribution to the Peripatetic tradition ("Alexander of Aphrodisas: Scolasticism and Innovation"). Still, one may doubt that it is necessary, or even justified, to use a new label to describe Alexander's philosophical project. It is one thing to define a particular doctrine as Neo-Aristotelian, and another to assume that the whole of Alexander's production carries out a Neo-Aristotelian project. One may also object to the introduction of this new historical category by saying that the distance that separates Plato from the Neo-Platonists is not comparable to that separating Aristotle from Alexander. The latter did not renew Aristotle's philosophy as much as Plotinus or Proclus did Plato's. Finally, in a more radical way, one could reject the pertinence of this suggestion and consider this historical category a useless hypostatization of something that in Alexander never took the form of a program. Just as the Platonists of late antiquity thought of themselves only as Platonists, Alexander would have never agreed to call himself anything other than an Aristotelian philosopher, that is, a faithful follower of Aristotle.

All these objections are reasonable warnings, but they do not do away with the need for acknowledging a discontinuity between Alexander and the preceding Peripatetic tradition. Since Moraux 1982, it has not been unusual to adopt a more-or-less teleological approach to the Peripatetic tradition and to see in Alexander the full realization of a process initiated with Andronicus of Rhodes. I would like to partially resist this presentation and suggest that Alexander marks a new turn in the Peripatetic tradition.

Alexander is in a significant way heir to the Peripatetic renaissance that began in the first century BC. At least three features are prominent in the reception of Aristotle during this time. They are the following: (1) a critical engagement with Aristotle's texts and with questions pertaining to the order, structure, and authenticity of his corpus of writings; (2) a combination of scholarly activity with lecturing and writing of a more popular kind than the commentaries; (3) an effort to respond from within the Aristotelian tradition to essentially post-Aristotelian concerns.[4] All these features also characterize Alexander's approach to Aristotle. Moreover, as we will see shortly, Alexander makes some of his closest contemporaries' suggestions his own. In what sense, then, should his reception of Aristotle be considered a turning point in the Peripatetic tradition?

A first, partial answer is that the three features outlined above are found in Alexander's work in an amplified and better defined way. I will illustrate this claim by elaborating on the first point listed above. The critical engagement

4 On these three points, I refer the reader to chapter 5 (Aristotelianism in the First Century BC). Concerning point (2), see also Gottschalk 1987.

with Aristotle takes in Alexander the form of a global project whose aim is to make Aristotle's writings a coherent *corpus* defending a single philosophical position. At the local level, Alexander is willing to leave open more than one exegetical option. This is, however, no longer true at the global level. It would be going too far to contend that Alexander establishes the paradigm for a dogmatic reading of Aristotle. We are nevertheless more than justified in arguing that it is with him that the Aristotelian tradition begins to approach Aristotle's writings as a canonical *corpus* from both a textual and a doctrinal point of view. This attitude toward Aristotle contrasts with the creative readings of Aristotle adopted by some of Alexander's predecessors.

But the novelty of Alexander's project does not simply consist in offering a unified reading of the Aristotelian *corpus* that resolves possible tensions or apparent inconsistencies. His extensive approach to Aristotle's thought is not just the result of scholarly concern. It is also the mark of a new philosophical agenda. The ultimate goal of this agenda is to establish an all-embracing philosophical system capable of responding in the best possible way to the philosophical issues debated by his contemporaries. This approach builds on the assumption that the same logical, physical, and ontological principles apply to all parts of Aristotle's world. This gives him the key to establishing a unified causal theory that partially fills the gap separating the two heterogeneous regions of the Aristotelian cosmos: the celestial, incorruptible realm and the sublunary world, subject to generation and corruption. This unitary causal theory is the mark of Alexander's new Aristotelianism and the core of what Arabic philosophers would go on to integrate into their philosophical projects.

Alexander's systematic reading of Aristotle is made possible by a thorough application of hylomorphism. If Aristotle made explicit use of the couple matter and form to account for the being of complex sublunary substances, Alexander applies hylomorphism to all beings, including celestial bodies and simple corruptible bodies, and argues for the ontological and epistemological primacy of form over matter and the compound of form and matter. In this sense, Alexander's theory of the form must be seen as the philosophical focus of his reading of Aristotle.[5]

This doctrine constitutes the theoretical core of his new Aristotelianism and presupposes a twofold general commitment. In logic and ontology, his claim that form is the essence of the individual substance presupposes a gradualist theory of truth and being.[6] In physics, Alexander is committed to the view that form is the causal principle that explains the physical behavior of all the

5 This thesis is defended in Rashed 2007.

6 Cf. Rashed 2007: 309–323.

natural beings in the sublunary as well as in the celestial world.[7] While form is the real principle of both the lower and upper boundaries of the Aristotelian world, namely the individual sensible composites and their genus, it is not the unique place of being. Rather, Alexander admits the existence of an ontological hierarchy in which a certain degree of being is assigned to the compound of matter and form as well as to matter even if substantial form, notably separate form, ranks first in the hierarchy.

In the rest of this chapter, I will introduce the reader to Alexander's new Aristotelianism by looking at how his twofold general commitment is implemented in logic, ontology, and natural philosophy.

3 Logic and Ontology: From the *Categories* to the *Metaphysics*

Alexander's reading of the logical *corpus* confirms that his overall interpretation of Aristotle has a focus on the doctrine of form. This interpretation, which has been labeled essentialism,[8] marks a departure from the previous Peripatetic tradition. In what follows, I will offer some evidence in favor of this hypothesis. I will also suggest that logic is not the only place where the essentialist project is at work. This project finds confirmation in the demonstration that substantial form is the principle of substance and for this reason the principle of being itself. This is a result that only metaphysics as a science of being *qua* being achieves. In this sense, metaphysics is the culmination of Alexander's essentialist project.

Alexander's overall logical theory as well as his reading of Aristotle's theory of form is a direct response to Boethus of Sidon.[9] The extant evidence suggests that, striving to read the *Categories* together with *Metaphysics* 7 (*Zeta*), Boethus equated substantial form, secondary substances, and universals in order to discard the three from the category of substance.[10] By his lights, the genus is nothing in itself but exists only in the last *differentia* (the so-called specific difference or *differentia specifica*). This *differentia* subsumes the other *differentiae* as well as the species under itself. Thus, it is the fundamental principle of classification. As such, however, it is not a substance but rather a quality, whereas species and genera are mere collections of qualified

7 Cf. Rashed 2007: 27–31.

8 Rashed 2007.

9 Rashed 2007.

10 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 78.4–20 and 97.28–34 (cf. Dexippus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 48.1–6); Syrianus, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 106.5–8.

particulars.[11] On this reading, the only items in Aristotle's ontology that match the definition of substance advanced in the *Categories* (what is neither in something nor said of something, 2a12–13) are the particulars and their matter.[12]

Against Boethus, Alexander elaborates a doctrine of the specific *differentia* which can be considered the logical side of his essentialism.[13] In the short essay *On the Specific Differences* [*De differentis specificis*], preserved only in Arabic, Alexander draws a distinction between the *differentia* taken *per se* and the *differentia* taken together with the genus.[14] In the first sense, the *differentia* is a quality; in the second sense, it shares the categorical status of the genus with which it is predicated synonymously. Alexander suggests that *differentia* taken in the second sense must be defined as "that which is in something, being as its part," and that in this sense it is substance. With respect to natural kind, thus, the *differentia* must be equated with the form and the substance of the species to which it is predicated synonymously.[15]

The hypothesis that Alexander's essentialist project is a reaction against Boethus' reading finds confirmation in Alexander's interpretation of Aristotle's theory of universals.[16] According to Dexippus, Alexander claimed the priority of particulars over universals arguing that "when the common thing is eliminated, the individual is not eliminated altogether."[17] But Alexander endorses the doctrine of the priority of particulars only in a qualified form.[18] Defending a kind of moderate realist theory of universals, Alexander makes clear that particulars are prior to the species or genera to which they belong, but that they are not prior to the immanent and common natures in virtue of which they are member of these two classes of things.[19] These immanent natures are objects of definition. Particulars as such, that is, taken with all the material circumstances that characterize them, are not objects of definition but only of sense-perception. Definitions refer to the common entities that exist in them or, to put things differently, to those particulars insofar as they are determined by

11 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 97.31–35. On Boethus' "nominalist" reading of Aristotle's doctrine of universals, see Chiaradonna 2013.

12 On Boethus' ontology, see Rashed 2013.

13 Rashed 2007.

14 On this text, see Rashed 2007.

15 Rashed 2007.

16 Chiaradonna 2013. For a synthetic presentation of Alexander's doctrine of universals see Sorabji 2005.

17 Dexippus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 45.24–31.

18 Rashed 2004.

19 Tweedale 1984.

the common entities that are present in them.[20] Immanent natures are not *per se* universals; rather, they exist as universals only insofar as our mind grasps them in particulars. To illustrate this point, Alexander claims that the universal is a sort of accident of the immanent nature.

Alexander's logic reveals his essentialist project insofar as it shows how form, considered as the *differentia specifica* and the immanent nature of the individual substance, is the real *explanandum*. In this sense, the *Categories* are the first step in his essentialist project. However, as Alexander makes clear in his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, a study of substance as principle of being is needed to complete the essentialist project and, in particular, to show the ontological priority of substantial form. This does not mean that the doctrine presented in the *Categories*, or in the other logical treatises, is eventually superseded by what Aristotle says in the *Metaphysics*. On the contrary, Alexander argues for the integration of what Aristotle says in the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics*. Still, if we keep in mind the role that the *Categories* played in the return to Aristotle, his essentialist project is not simply a shift of emphasis away from the *Categories* but rather a significant departure from the previous exegetical tradition. Indeed, it is only with Alexander that the *Metaphysics* acquires the central place that it still has in any reading of Aristotle.

Alexander's interpretation of Aristotle's metaphysics, as a primary, unitary, and universal science, must be interpreted in the light of his essentialist reading of Aristotle.[21] Alexander makes an effort not only to read in a coherent way all the conflicting passages in Aristotle, but also to show that his metaphysics meets the requirements of scientific knowledge exposed in the *Posterior Analytics*.[22] In order to do this, he claims that metaphysics has a single subject-matter: being *qua* being. Following Aristotle's doctrine, he argues that being has several meanings and that substance is the first of them. Going beyond Aristotle's explicit assertions, however, he argues that this multiplicity can be brought to unity, since substance is the *cause* of the other meanings. In this sense, metaphysics remains the science that is concerned with all the meanings of beings; however, since substance is the cause of the other meanings, metaphysics is *primarily* the science of substance. According to the same causal explanation, Alexander contends that substantial form as well as the intellects of the celestial beings, which he regards as separate forms, fall within the scope of the metaphysics. The two kinds of forms, as we will see, are the cause of the individual substance. In this sense, metaphysics is also theology,

20 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Question* 1.3, 7.27–28.

21 Guyomarc'h forthcoming.

22 Cf. Bonelli 2001.

since it is the science of the most excellent substances and of the first among them, which Alexander defines as the first separate form and identifies with God.[23]

Contrary to what some scholars have suggested,[24] Alexander does not reduce metaphysics to the study of god, just as he does not reduce being to substance. Rather, his interpretation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* confirms his overall essentialist reading: being *converges* on substantial form as on its principle; likewise, metaphysics ultimately *points toward* the study of the last divine substances, without being reduced to it.[25] A major difficulty, in this context, is to figure out the kind of causality that Alexander aims to assign to the first intellect. The writings that Alexander devotes to Aristotle's study of nature clarify this point, at the same time as they show the systematic nature of his project. The essential tools of this systematization is the thorough application of hylomorphism.

4 Substance in Natural Philosophy

A clear introduction to this systematization can be found at the beginning of the treatise *On the Soul* [*De anima*],[26] where Alexander affirms that not only the more complex substances but also the elements are compounds of matter and form. In this context, he also explains how we should understand these two principles.[27] In particular, he argues that substantial form is the nature and incorporeal principle determining all the activities of each natural being and characterizing its specific motional pattern.

According to this general explanatory paradigm, all natural beings in the sublunary world are characterized by two kinds of qualities that inhere in a primary substrate: corporeal tangible qualities and incorporeal kinetic qualities. Tangible qualities are capable of acting upon and being affected by each other and changing according to a scale of intensity, while incorporeal qualities are responsible for the kinetic propensities of natural beings. Alexander argues that both the tangible qualities and the incorporeal ones constitute the formal pattern of composite substances. He makes clear, though, that the incorporeal

23 For more details, see Guyomarc'h forthcoming. Cf. Fazzo 2002.

24 Genequand 1979 and Donini 2003.

25 This reading will be adopted in the Arabic world by Averroes. See Cerami 2015.

26 Alexander's *On the Soul* is not a commentary on Aristotle's homonymous treatise but rather a reworking of Aristotle's psychology. Alexander also wrote commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul* which is now lost.

27 Alexander of Aphrodisas, *On the Soul* 2.25–3.2.

qualities follow upon the corporeal qualities and constitute the real formal principle of composite substances. Natural bodies, accordingly, are the specific kind of bodies that they are in virtue of these incorporeal qualities. This is the reason why one must argue that "bodies act and are acted upon by way of incorporeal [principles]."[28] Form is the incorporeal efficient principle that determines all activities and kinetic propensities of the composite substance. Even if texts such as *On Generation and Corruption* 2.3 and *On the Soul* 3.4 provide the background for this doctrine, Aristotle never adopts such a clear-cut distinction between incorporeal and corporeal qualities and never attributes an incorporeal causal efficacy to the form.[29] This is without any doubt one of the essential traits of Alexander's Neo-Aristotelianism.

Concerning the hylomorphic constitution of composite substances, Alexander also makes clear that the two kinds of qualities ultimately inhere in a primary substrate, which is a uniform constitutive aspect of each body.[30] He argues that prime matter *qua* substrate receptive of all qualities is "formless and shapeless by its very definition." For this reason, it is not itself a body but a constitutive principle of all bodies.[31]

Alexander uses the four sublunary elements as a paradigmatic case. Elemental bodies (fire, air, water, and earth) are composed of prime matter and elemental qualities. These qualities are of two kinds: tangible qualities and in-corporeal qualities. The contrary tangible qualities (hot and cold, wet and dry) are capable of acting upon and being affected by each other. As such, they make possible the mutual transformation of the four elements and their mixing together. By contrast, the opposite kinetic properties (heavy and light) are incapable of acting and being affected, but they account for the kinetic propensities of each of the four sublunary elements, determining their predisposition to go downward or upward. Alexander claims that they follow upon tangible qualities and inhere in the prime matter as their substrate.[32] Each element, then, is determined by a couple of tangible qualities whose specific combination "makes up" the formal kinetic principle.

This elemental structure is worked into the structure of higher-level entities. According to this systematic approach, Alexander claims that in the

28 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 7.14.

29 This doctrine will be part of Alexander's legacy in the Arabic world. It will be at the heart of the debate between Avicenna and Averroes on the ontological constitution of natural beings. See Cerami 2015.

30 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 3.22–26.

31 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 3.38–4.4; 5.19–22.

32 Alexander of Aphrodisas, *On the Soul* 5.4–9.

more complex substances substantial forms supervenes on elemental matter arranged in a particular way. Mixture provides a uniform mechanism for all types of generation. Alexander describes it as the interaction of the active and passive opposite formal qualities of the elements, whose capacity remains in the product of the mixture. He makes clear that the process of mixture terminates in a new stable qualitative equilibrium from which the new complex form comes into existence.[33] In this sense, the forms of the more complex natural bodies are built out of the forms of the simpler bodies.

The same explanation is offered in Alexander's treatise *On Mixture*. There, Alexander claims that when several bodies with the potentiality for reciprocal action are compounded with one another, and they are in the state where one cannot exceed the other by its contrariety so as to destroy it and change it into it sown nature, "by the equality of the powers" by which they interact, these bodies are in turn acted on by one another in the same way. They advance "to the point where they lose that superiority in their contrarieties by which they differed and were opposite, and *create one quality from all the powers*," while the matter underlying them is unified and becomes one.[34]

This doctrine has been considered as the heart of Alexander's presumed materialistic (and erroneous) reading of Aristotle.[35] On this account, Alexander's materialism has both a diachronic and synchronic side. From a diachronic point of view, the substantial form of complex substances would be nothing other than the outcome of the mixture of the elements; as such, substantial form would be posterior to the organization of the body and would result from it. From a synchronic point of view, substantial form would be the sum of the forms of the lower-level elements engaged in the mixture and as such it would be an accident rather than a substantial principle. This materialistic interpretation of Alexander's philosophy has been emended by several scholars during the past thirty years. They all strived to show that from both a diachronic and a synchronic point of view the theory that complex form is an incorporeal principle generated from the mixture of the lower-level ingredients is neither materialistic nor against the spirit of Aristotelian philosophy; this theory, on the contrary, allows Alexander to contrast the doctrines advanced by the Platonic and Stoic schools as well as competing readings of Aristotle (most notably the one developed by Boethus of Sidon).

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33 On this point too, Arabic philosophers are indebted to Alexander. On mixture in Averroes, see Cordonier 2013 and Cerami 2012. On the notion of "complex forms and matters" in Averroes, see Cerami 2015.

34 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Mixture* 230.20–34.

35 Moraux 1942; Thillet 1981.

In this context, two characterizations of Alexander's account of form have been pointed out: the equation of substantial form to the power (δύναμις) emerging from the lower-level properties and its equation to the perfection (τελειότης) of the generated substance. This twofold equivalence is massively attested in Alexander's *On the Soul*, but it is also at work in his commentaries on Aristotle's treatises as well as in his *Questions*. This characterization of the form avoids the materialistic drift attributed to Alexander's ontology and constitutes another essential tool of his systematic reading of Aristotle's philosophy.

The equation of substantial form to a power rather than to an activity allows Alexander to make the formal principle analogous to an efficient cause.[36] Accordingly, the form as power is the internal unmovable causal factor of each substance's natural movement, which is only incidentally moved along with the body of the informed substance. The identification of substantial form with a power entails an implicit rejection of the Platonic doctrine of form, as well as Stoic materialism,[37] precisely because it proves the incorporeal and unmovable, though inseparable, nature of substantial form. Here too Alexander goes beyond the simple exegesis of Aristotle's text—not only because, unlike Aristotle, he applies the notion of form as power to the elements as well as to the more complex substances, but also because the term δύναμις entails the idea of an inner causal power.[38]

The equation of form to perfection constitutes another essential tool of Alexander's essentialism, complementary rather than alternative to the notion of form as power.[39] Alexander makes it clear that each natural substance has two perfections, a first and a second one, according to whether they carry out or not their own capacity.[40] The first perfection corresponds to what Aristotle calls first actuality (ἐντελέχεια); the second is the full realization of the capacity and corresponds to Aristotle's second actuality. Alexander insists that both perfections are the form of the composite substance, though the second alone expresses its complete essence. For example, one can state that fire is fire even

36 Accattino 1988 and 1995; Accattino and Donini 1996; Kupreeva 1999.

37 On the legitimacy of Alexander's reconstruction of stoic physics, see Cordonier 2008.

38 The doctrine of form as power is also an essential feature of the theory of mixture understood in a non-reductionist way. Cf. Kupreeva 1999, 2003, and 2004. These studies confirm the emergentist reading of Alexander's doctrine proposed in Caston 1999. On Alexander's theory of mixture see also Cordonier 2007.

39 The equation of form to perfection is discussed in Accattino 1995 and Kupreeva 1999. But it is only Marwan Rashed (in Rashed 2007 and 2011) who has fully appreciated its ontological relevance in Alexander's system.

40 Alexander, *On the Soul* 9.14–26; 16.1–11.

when it is here down on earth, but that it is completely realized as such when it is at the outermost periphery of the sublunary world.[41] In an analogous way, as we will see, a human being is a human being even when he is not exercising his rational faculty; however, a human being is completely realized only when he is actually thinking.

Even if Aristotle explicitly maintains a distinction between first and a second actuality, Alexander's distinction between two kinds of perfection adds something new to Aristotle's philosophy—not only because, unlike Aristotle, Alexander applies it to all natural beings,[42] but also because this distinction presupposes that the form is in itself a dynamic entity.[43] The passage from the first perfection to the second perfection is an accomplishment of the form rather than the simple passage from a capacity to its exercise. This formal accomplishment can be seen as a real "ontological increase" of the form and, consequently, of the composite substance, since in virtue of the completion of the form the composite substance becomes more and more perfect.

Scholars have insisted on Alexander's equation of substantial form to power and perfection. And yet there is also a third characterization of form that has gone largely unnoticed.[44] In several passages from his treatise *On the Soul*,[45] as in some of the short essays collected in the *Questions*,[46] Alexander identifies form as power and first perfection with a disposition or a state (ἕξις). This identification sheds new light on the generation of substantial form as well as its ontological status. By using what Aristotle says in *Physics* 7.2–3 to characterize substantial form, Alexander clarifies the idea that form is an immovable and inseparable principle of movement at the same time as he elucidates the process through which form comes into existence. More directly, Alexander points out that form as disposition and first perfection is always the product of an alteration, whereas the second perfection is the result of a change according to the form (κατὰ τὸ εἶδος).[47] Alteration, explains Alexander, insofar as it is change toward a contrary, is always change to something different; in this sense, it is always the corruption of what precedes it. By contrast, the passage

41 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Questions* 2.18, 62.18–30; 2.3, 48.12.

42 Accattino 1995.

43 Rashed 2007; 2011: 146–148.

44 For a detailed discussion of this doctrine, I refer the reader to Cerami 2016.

45 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 9.14–26, 16.1–11, 15.9–18, 31.10–17. For a fuller list of passages, see Cerami 2016.

46 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Questions* 3.2, 3.3.

47 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 153.15–155.1.

to the second perfection is a "progression (ἐπίδοσις) toward the thing itself" and so it is an ontological increase.[48]

At this point, it should be clear that the identification of form with state clarifies the way in which form is an immovable principle. This identification makes possible the application of this doctrine to noetic. In this sense, Alexander's noetic should be read as a natural development, if not even an integral part, of his physical doctrine. Noetic is undoubtedly the most studied part of Alexander's philosophy, especially his thesis of the mortality of material intellect. However, the importance that the doctrine of form as state has for Alexander's noetic has never been pointed out. In *Question* 3.2, Alexander claims that in the case of intellect, as in the case of other psychological functions, the emergence of intellectual disposition (or, according to the standard terminology, the intellect *in habitus*) follows an alteration, while the passage to the activity is neither a change nor the outcome of a change but rather a progression or an increase (ἐπίδοσις).[49] Aristotle uses this term in *On the Soul* 2.5 to explain the passage from a capacity to its exercise. In Alexander, however, this term acquires an ontological relevance in the sense that the passage from the disposition to the actual intellection is not just the exercise of a disposition but rather a progression toward its own perfection.

The new meaning that the term "ἐπίδοσις" takes in Alexander shows up clearly in *Question* 3.2. There, Alexander claims that theoretical disposition defines a human being as such, but that only the human being that realizes this disposition is a fully realized human being, that is, a virtuous human being.[50] The ontological consequence of this claim is that intellect must be considered the form of man, but *qua* disposition it is only his first perfection, which can progress toward its full realization, which is intellect in actuality. Intellect in actuality, thus, as second perfection, is the fully realized and ultimate form of man.

Alexander also explains that human intellect cannot pass from disposition to actuality without an intellect that is already active. He argues that this active intellect cannot but be a pure form separated from matter and altogether impassive, and that it must be identified with the first unmoved

48 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Question* 3.2, 81.8–25.

49 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Question* 3.3, 83.35–84.2. Alexander makes it clear that teaching is the process through which alteration takes place in the noetic context.

50 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Question* 3.2, 82.11–20. On the idea that the virtuous man is a more accomplished man, see Alexander of Aphrodisas, *On Fate* 197.30–198.3, where Alexander also defines virtue as the perfection of each proper nature.

mover of *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*), which is an intellect thinking itself.[51] The first unmoved mover, thus, becomes not only the ultimate foundation of our knowledge but also of our existence.

Alexander's sublunary physics, coupled with his noetic, gives us access to his cosmological doctrine. I have already recalled Alexander's commitment to explaining the totality of the natural world in terms of matter and form and in light of his theory of form as perfection. It is time to see briefly how Alexander implements his systematic project in the context of his celestial physics. Even when Aristotle affirms that the celestial spheres have a soul and a matter in a way that is analogous to the sublunary substances,[52] he assures us that they are defined by their own perfection. The question for us is therefore whether we can find the distinction between a first and a second perfection not only in the sublunary but also in the celestial world. It seems that we should answer this question in the positive.

Alexander explains that the celestial spheres have a tendency (ἔφεσις) and a will (βούλησις) to move circularly in a continuous and uniform way.[53] This movement is the resultant of their thinking of an eternal and unmoved substance and of their desire to imitate it.[54] The first unmoved mover, thus, is the cause of the daily circular motion of the sphere of the fixed stars, which in turn imparts to the spheres of the planets their diurnal westward motion. By contrast, explains Alexander, the planets' eastward movement is due to their intellects and belong to them essentially.[55]

As natural beings, the celestial spheres, although eternal, have no means other than movement to imitate the eternal actuality of the first unmoved mover. In Alexander as in Aristotle, circular movement is the activity that comes closest to pure actuality, and for this reason the celestial spheres are also the most accomplished substances in the Aristotelian world.[56] Hence, the tendency of the celestial substances to imitate the first unmoved mover is analogous to a disposition of the sublunary substances, while their eternal movement is analogous to their second perfection. In this sense, the celestial

51 Moraux 1942 and 2001; Sharples 1987.

52 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 28.25–28.

53 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Quaestion* 1.25, 40.22–23. On Alexander's cosmological theory, see Rashed 2007.

54 Alexander, *On the Principles of the Cosmos* 16–19; 76–78; 96.

55 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Quaestion* 1.25, 1.10; 2.19; Alexander, *On the Principles of the Cosmos* 79. On the number of the unmoved movers, see Sharples 1982; Bodnár 1997 and 2014.

56 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Principles of the Cosmos* 135–137.

beings do not differ from the sublunary substances because it is not possible to distinguish between tendency and activity: rather, they differ because their activity is never hindered, since their thinking of the unmoved mover is never interrupted.

So far we have seen that Alexander's general physical scheme constitutes a complex and unitary causal system that applies to all beings in natural world. On the basis of this general scheme, Alexander builds his theory of the causality of the first unmoved mover and his doctrine of providence, which is also in a sense the pinnacle of his Neo-Aristotelianism. I would like to conclude this presentation of Alexander's project by elucidating the points of innovation that this doctrine entails. Although there is no denying that the question of the existence and extent of cosmic providence is a Stoic theme and that Alexander clearly reacts to it, his doctrine of providence is not just an attempt to update Aristotle in light of theoretical concerns that are essentially post-Aristotelian. Rather, it is a direct (indeed natural and inevitable) consequence of his reconstruction of the Aristotelian world as a causal system of a certain type.

In two treatises that are preserved only in Arabic translation, *On Providence* and *On the Principles of the Cosmos*, Alexander argues that the different and eternal motions of celestial spheres and the planets have a causal influence on sublunary world. This is to say, he maintains that the planets produce multiple changes in sublunary bodies by constantly changing their distance and position with regards to the earth, and that these movements bring about and preserve form and order in the sublunary realm. In this context, Alexander also elucidates the effective mechanism of this celestial influence. This cosmic order is realized through the "divine power" generated in the sublunary region by the motion of all heavenly bodies.[57] Alexander claims that this power "penetrates all parts of the world and holds its parts together."[58] Moreover, he argues that "it endows with existence and forms the substances in which it inheres, according to a certain proportion and a certain order."[59]

Even if the exact nature of this principle and the way in which it originates from the celestial spheres remain partially unclear,[60] Alexander maintains that the heavenly bodies through their divine power guarantee the order of the cosmos and contribute to the generation and the persistence of informed sublunary substances. He makes it clear that since they move by thinking of the first

57 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Providence* 10.25–26.

58 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Principles of the Cosmos* 129–132.

59 *Ibidem*.

60 On the immaterial and impassive nature of this action, see Freundenthal 2009.

unmoved mover, one must conclude that the first unmoved mover produces nature *through* the intermediary of the heavenly bodies.

Alexander's theory is a creative reading of what Aristotle says in *On Generation and Corruption* 2.10–11.[61] There, Aristotle argues that the motion of the sun along the ecliptic acting as the remote efficient cause of the mutual transformation of the four elements causes the continuous process of generation and corruption in the sublunary world. However, he does not says that the proper motion of the other planets and the resulting changes in their positions with respect to the earth has the causal role envisioned by Alexander.

On the topic of providence, Marwan Rashed has recently drawn attention to the use that Alexander makes of the Aristotelian distinction between two kinds of finality: the end for something (τινί) and the end of something (τινός).[62] Alexander uses this distinction to clarify the precise causal role of the unmoved mover and the extent of divine providence. He explains that sublunary and celestial substances tend toward their own second perfection, which is also their good, as toward *their own* end (τινί). They also tend toward the unmoved mover, as pure actuality, in that they all strive for eternity. In this sense, the unmoved mover is an external end, that is, the end of something (τινός). Thus, all natural beings tend directly toward their own internal perfection and indirectly toward their common external perfection. While the sublunary substances attain eternity only specifically, the celestial spheres are individually eternal.

At this point we are able to see that in Alexander's causal system the first unmoved mover is not the direct cause of providence. Strictly speaking, there is no divine providence in the celestial world, since the celestial bodies enjoy individually eternal life.[63] Divine providence is found only in the sublunary world, but it is exercised *via* the celestial spheres and notably through the last one, the sphere of the fixed stars whose intellect must be identified with the unmoved mover. The first unmoved mover thus is only remotely responsible of the order in the sublunary world and remains, as in Aristotle, a pure final cause.

Alexander's system displays a pyramidal structure whose top is constituted by the first unmoved mover, which is equated to the good. Since every being tends toward its own perfection as toward its good, the unmoved mover insofar as it is the perfection of all perfections is the supreme good. It is in this sense that

61 Freudenthal 2009.

62 Rashed 2011: 126–161.

63 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Question* 2.19, 63.15–28. Cf. *On Providence* 61.7–13. Sharples 1982: 200.

Alexander's doctrine of providence is the pinnacle of his Neo-Aristotelianism, for this doctrine is the direct consequence of Alexander's attempt to build a global causal scheme in which a single chain of causes connects god to the physical world and re-connects its two parts, the sublunary and supralunary regions, which seemed inexorably dissociated in Aristotle.

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Beyond the Peripatetic Tradition

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CHAPTER 9

The Reception of Aristotle in Antiochus and Cicero

John Dillon

1 Introduction

Antiochus of Ascalon, as we know, based his new departure in Platonism on a synthesis of the philosophical positions, as he interpreted them, of the Old Academy of Speusippus, Xenocrates and Polemo, the Peripatos of Aristotle and Theophrastus, and the Stoa (primarily of Zeno and Cleanthes).[1] So much is established; what we need to enquire into here is just what Aristotle Antiochus, and Cicero after him, had access to, and how this affects his interpretation. The estimation of this involves us inevitably in some deeply controversial issues, on which we will have to adopt a stance.

2 General Considerations

Let us review a few of the key passages in Cicero where Antiochus' position is set out. The fullest account is perhaps that propounded by M. Terentius Varro, acting as Antiochus' mouthpiece, in the *Posterior Academics* (17–18):

> But originating with Plato, a thinker of manifold variety and fertility, there was established a philosophy which, though it has two appellations, was really a single uniform system, that of the Academic and Peripatetic schools, which, while agreeing in doctrine, differed in name; for Plato left his sister's son Speusippus as heir, so to speak, of his system, but two pupils of outstanding zeal and learning, Xenocrates, a native of Chalcedon, and Aristotle, a native of Stagira; and accordingly the associates of Aristotle were called Peripatetics, because they used to debate while walking in the Lyceum, while the others, because they carried on Plato's practice of assembling and conversing in the Academy, got their appellation from the name of the place. But both schools drew plentiful supplies from Plato's abundance, and both framed a definitely formulated rule of doctrine, and this fully and copiously set forth, whereas they

1 I have discussed this at some length in Dillon 1977, chapter 2.

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> abandoned the famous Socratic custom of casting doubt on all subjects, without the admission of any positive statement. Thus was produced something that Socrates had been in the habit of reprobating entirely, a definite science of philosophy, with a regular arrangement of subjects and a formulated system of doctrine. At the outset, indeed, this was a single system with two names, as I have said, for there was no difference between the Peripatetics and the Old Academy of those days. Aristotle excelled, as I at all events think, in a certain copiousness of intellect (*abundantia ingenii*), but both schools drew from the same source, and both made the same classification of things to be desired and avoided (trans. Rackham, slightly emended).

We have here a fairly elaborate statement of what seems to have been Antiochus' view of the relation between Aristotle and the Academic tradition—with perhaps a slightly over-emphasised reference to the disloyalty to Socrates involved in the propounding of a dogmatic system of philosophy, maliciously inserted by Cicero, who himself remained loyal to the New-Academic tradition. Antiochus sees no serious conflict between Aristotle and the other immediate followers of Plato; but we have to ask ourselves, in this connection, which Aristotle is in prospect here? Is it the Aristotle familiar to us, the Aristotle of the surviving school treatises, or is it rather the Aristotle known to the Hellenistic world, the Aristotle of such exoteric works as the *Exhortation to Philosophy* [*Protrepticus*], the *On Philosophy*, the *On Justice*, and the dialogues—along, perhaps, with a number of rhetorical handbooks, roughly corresponding to our *Topics* and *Rhetoric*?[2]

The Aristotle known to Cicero, after all, is not only a figure of towering intellect and encyclopaedic philosophic interests, but of mellifluous style.[3] Consider this reference from the beginning of the *Tusculan Disputations* (1.7):

> But just as Aristotle, a man of supreme intellect, knowledge and fertility of speech (*vir summo ingenio, scientia, copia*), under the stimulus of the fame of the rhetorician Isocrates, began, like him, to teach the young to speak and combine wisdom with eloquence, similarly it is my design not to lay aside my early devotion to the art of expression, but to employ it in this grander and more fruitful art (trans. King).

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2 Cicero makes reference to *On Philosophy* at *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.33; to *On Justice* at *On the Republic* 3.12; to the dialogue *Eudemus* at *On Divination* 1.53; his own *Hortensius* may plausibly be seen as loosely based on the *Protrepticus*.

3 Cf. the reference at *Prior Academics* 38.119 to Aristotle "pouring forth a golden stream of eloquence" (*flumen orationis aureum fundens*)—in defence of the eternity of the world.

So Cicero, in bringing the arts of rhetoric to bear on the noble subject of philosophy, sees himself as following the example of Aristotle, who is in turn responding to the stimulus of Isocrates![4] Now we know that Cicero had available to him some rhetorical works of Aristotle—not necessarily the *Topics* or *Rhetoric* available to us, but perhaps some of the items listed in the extraordinarily copious (and confused) list of works provided by Diogenes Laertius (5.22–7),[5] such as the *On Rhetoric or Gryllus; On Questioning and Answering*, in 2 books; *Topics criticizing the Definitions*, in two books;[6] *Collection of* (*Rhetorical*) *Arts* (τεχνῶν συναγωγή), in 2 books; *Art of Rhetoric*, in 2 books; *On Diction* (περὶ λέξεως), in 2 books.[7] Cicero does indeed allow Catulus, in the *On the Orator* (2.152), to make reference to the probability that his colleague M. Antonius had read a work of Aristotle's on *topoi*; and a reference a little later (2.160) by Antonius himself to his having read a work in which Aristotle collects the views of his predecessors may be a reference to the τεχνῶν συναγωγή mentioned above. It would also seem, from a passage of the *Brutus* (12.46–8), that Cicero had access to this work, as he here reports Aristotle's account of the early history of rhetoric, for which this work is the most plausible source.

Now, as Jonathan Barnes would argue,[8] we seem to have an indication from a passage of the *Orator* (32.114) that Cicero was acquainted with the opening of the *Rhetoric* as we know it, since he there declares: "And even before Zeno, Aristotle, at the beginning of his *Art of Rhetoric*, had said that this art so to speak corresponds to dialectic"; while at various other places (e.g. *On the Orator* 3.193, in praise of "the posterior paean that Aristotle approves of") he alludes to Aristotle's remarks on prose rhythm, a topic which Aristotle addresses in chapter 8 of Book 3 of that work. In either case, though, it is possible to argue that similar remarks occurred in the versions of the work listed by Diogenes. After all, having stated that Aristotle begins his work in this way, Cicero goes on to specify that Aristotle says that the two arts differ in that

4 This point about Aristotle emulating Isocrates is made again at *On the Orator* 3.141, with the additional detail of Aristotle's adapting a line from Euripides' *Philoctetes*, by way of dramatizing his stance! There is plainly an anecdote at the back of this—relayed, perhaps, by a later Peripatetic such as Critolaus.

5 The Hellenistic provenance of this list has been challenged, e.g. by Jonathan Barnes 1997, but, as it is surely a pre-Andronican production, it is hard to see where else it can originate.

6 Whatever "criticizing the definitions" (πρὸς τοὺς ὅρους) may mean. We have notice also of a collection of 13 books of *Definitions* (ὁρισμοί), which may have some relevance to this.

7 It is possible, of course, that these last two items, put together, may make up the three books of *Rhetoric* known to us, since the third book of the extant *Rhetoric* could be described as concerning λέξις, but the two books listed here would have to be conflated into one.

8 Barnes 1997: 52.

"the former mode of speech is more diffuse (*latior*), while the latter is more compact (*contractior*)," a point not made in this passage of the extant *Rhetoric*.

The details, and the degree of plausibility, of the famous story, preserved by both Strabo and Plutarch, of the rediscovery of the school treatises of Aristotle by Apellicon of Teos, and the conveyance of Apellicon's library from Athens to Rome by Sulla in 84 BC, have been discussed elsewhere in this volume.[9] I share the scepticism of many scholars, including, notably, Jonathan Barnes, as to the accuracy of the details of this story—and I take note of the countervailing account preserved by Athenaeus, at the beginning of his *Sophists at Dinner* (3 A–B), of Neleus' library being bought up by Ptolemy Philadelphus, and brought to the Library in Alexandria—but it seems hard to deny that *some* discovery of books was made by Apellicon, that Sulla did bring a considerable library of hitherto neglected works of Aristotle (and Theophrastus) to Rome, and that somewhat later, perhaps in the mid-60's, the grammarian Tyrannio—whom Strabo (13.1.54) describes as a lover of Aristotle (φιλαριστοτέλης)—gained access to the books and was allowed to make copies of them. The chronology here, however, is very uncertain, and there is little sign, in the works of Cicero, that he had achieved any real acquaintance with the works of Aristotle now available to us.

The truth in relation to all this may in fact be somewhat fuzzy, as between total lack of acquaintance with the rediscovered works on the part of Cicero, and his substantive access to them. We may, I think, entertain the possibility that Cicero knew of their existence—after all, we know from his own testimony that he had access to the library of Sulla, now in the possession of his son Faustus (from an enthusiastic mention of his visiting it, in a letter to Atticus from Cumae, dated to April 55 BC)[10]—but he may have found them so rebarbative stylistically as to have been deterred from a detailed study of them—Aristotle being for him, as we have seen above, a stylist of "golden" eloquence! After all, Strabo (13.1.54) reports the general view that the copies available were so "corrupted" as to be almost unreadable, which may be interpreted as an indication that the text appeared so disjointed and elliptical to a well-trained

9 Cf. chapter 4 (Andronicus of Rhodes and the Construction of the Aristotelian Corpus).

10 *To Atticus* 4.10.1. We may also note that, at the beginning of *On Goals* 3.10, Cicero portrays himself as visiting the library of Lucullus, to borrow from him some *commentaria* of Aristotle, which he looks forward to reading over his holidays! These works may actually have come from the library of Sulla, since Lucullus had been appointed by Sulla as guardian of young Faustus (Plutarch, *Life of Lucullus* 4.6).

Hellenistic sensibility as to be well-nigh intolerable.[11] Such a suggestion as this may serve as a possible solution to the problem as to how Cicero, while having some knowledge of the fact that there existed both "exoteric" and "esoteric" works of Aristotle, as we shall see that he did, could remain substantially unacquainted with the latter.

3 Survey of Aristotelian Philosophy

After these preliminary cautions, we may turn to examine a fairly comprehensive account of Peripatetic philosophy presented by M. Pupius Piso Calpurnianus, the spokesman for "Antiochian" philosophy, at the outset of the exposition of Platonic/Peripatetic ethics in *On Goals*, Book 5. Piso, we may note, though favourable to Antiochus, chooses to regard himself as a Peripatetic rather than a Platonist, under the influence of the rather shadowy figure of Staseas of Naples, who was his house-philosopher, and who himself (like Antiochus' pupil Aristo) professed Peripateticism rather than Platonism.[12] The dramatic date of this section of the *On Goals* is 79 BC, when Cicero himself was studying in Athens under Antiochus, but the date of composition is the spring and summer of 45 BC, and a certain amount had transpired in respect of the dissemination of Aristotle's school treatises in the interval between these two dates, as we have seen.

At any rate, from a crucial reference near the beginning of Piso's speech (*On Goals* 5.12), we can gather that Cicero (and, we may presume, Antiochus) had some degree of access to, not one, but two treatises of Aristotle on ethics. The text is as follows (Piso is demurring at what he regards as the rather

11 An analogy from later antiquity might be the assumption of Plotinus' rather literary contemporary Platonist Longinus, as reported by Porphyry (*Life of Plotinus* 19), that the tractates of Plotinus that he had received must be faulty copies, as their style was so troublesome.

12 For more on Staseas of Naples, I refer the reader to chapter 5 (Aristotelianism in the First Century BC). The fact that such figures as Staseas, Aristo, and Cratippus opted to follow Aristotle rather than Plato may actually itself be an indication of an upswing of interest in Aristotle in the wake of the initial rediscovery of the esoteric works. Brad Inwood, in his recent study of Peripatetic ethics after Aristotle, (2014: 65–72), makes the acute observation that Cicero's Piso, in *On Goals* 5.57ff., exhibits a return to Aristotle's own emphasis on the role of action (πράξις), both physical and intellectual, which had been obscured in previous Hellenistic versions of Peripatetic ethics, and attributes that to Staseas' renewed acquaintance with the *Nicomachean Ethics*.

weak-minded view of Theophrastus than happiness is dependent to at least some extent on luck):

> But this view seems to me to be—if I may so put it—softer and more delicate than the power and weight of virtue demand. So let us keep to Aristotle and his son Nicomachus—whose carefully written books on character (*de moribus*) are indeed ascribed to Aristotle, although I do not see why the son could not have been like his father (trans. Rackham).

As remarked acutely by Barnes,[13] even such an apparently explicit reference as this is not without problems. First of all, the second Aristotelian book *de moribus* referred to by Cicero here (and rather simplemindedly attributed to his son Nicomachus) is unlikely to be the *Nicomachean Ethics* known to us, though it doubtless comprised parts of it; while the former one, since it is not attributed to Eudemus, is probably the spurious *Great Ethics* rather than the *Eudemian Ethics*. But at least Cicero's Piso can be seen to be aware of a distinction in the status accorded to external goods as between Aristotle and Theophrastus, and this seems to betoken some knowledge of some works on ethics by Aristotle.

Let us turn back, however, to the immediately prior stage of Piso's speech (*On Goals* 5.9–11), where he begins by setting out a conspectus of Peripatetic philosophy as propounded by Aristotle and Theophrastus, as it provides us with a fairly comprehensive view of Cicero's understanding of Aristotle's doctrine:

> About the educational value of the Peripatetic system I have said enough, in the briefest possible way, a few moments ago.[14] Its arrangement, like that of most other systems, is threefold:[15] one part deals with nature, the second with discourse, and the third with conduct. Natural philosophy (*natura*) the Peripatetics have investigated so thoroughly that no region

13 Barnes 1997: 58–59.

14 In fact, right at the beginning of his speech (*On Goals* 5.7), after describing Aristotle as "the prince of philosophers (*princeps philosophorum*)," he has provided the following characterization: "From their writings and teachings can be learnt the whole of liberal culture, of history and of style; moreover they include such a variety of sciences, that without the equipment that they give no one can be adequately prepared to embark on any of the higher careers. They have produced orators, generals and statesmen."

15 We may discern here a version of the tripartite division of philosophy, the formulation of which is attributed originally to Xenocrates by Sextus Empiricus (*Against the Professors* 7.16–19), but employed already by Aristotle at *Topics* 1.14, 105b19ff., as if it were an already established distinction. This tripartition is given in the order Physics–Logic–Ethics, which is rather odd.

in sky or sea or land (to speak poetically) has been passed over. Nay more, in treating of the elements of being and the constitution of the universe they have established much of their doctrine not merely by probable arguments but by conclusive mathematical demonstration, applying a quantity of material derived from facts that they have themselves investigated to the discovery of other facts beyond the reach of observation. Aristotle gave a complete account of the birth, nutrition and structure of all living creatures,[16] Theophrastus of the natural history of plants and the causes and constitution of vegetable organisms in general; and the knowledge thus attained facilitated the investigation of the most obscure questions. In logic their teachings include the rules of rhetoric as well as of dialectic; and Aristotle their founder started the practice of arguing both pro and contra upon every topic,[17] not like Arcesilaus, always controverting every proposition, but setting out all the possible arguments on either side in every subject. The third division of philosophy investigates the rules of human well-being; this too was treated by the Peripatetics, comprising not only the principles of individual conduct but also of the government of states. From Aristotle we learn the manners, customs and institutions, and from Theophrastus the laws also, of nearly all the states not only of Greece but of the barbarians as well. Both described the proper qualifications of a statesman, both moreover wrote lengthy treatises on the best form of constitution;[18] Theophrastus treated the

16 This seems to betoken a knowledge of biological treatises, such as *Generation of Animals, History of Animals, Motion of Animals*; however, we may also note such entries in Diogenes' list as *On Nature*, in 3 books, *On Animals*, in 9 books (perhaps identical with *History of Animals*), *Dissections*, in 8 books, and *On Plants*, in 2 books. On the subject of the possible influence of Aristotle's biological treatises on such a protracted passage as *On the Nature of the Gods* 2.121–161 (as well as on his contemporary Lucretius), see Tutrone 2006.

17 This feature is emphasized also at *On the Orator* 3.80, where there is mention of "being able in Aristotelian fashion to speak on both sides about every subject, and by means of knowing Aristotle's rules to reel off two speeches on opposite sides of every case." This would seem to have been a feature of Hellenistic Peripateticism, to judge from Strabo's rather slighting reference in 13.1.54, to their practice of θέσεις ληκυθίζειν—a notable phrase, which might be rendered "fooling around with (eristical) theses."

18 This would seem to refer to the *Politics*, in at least some form; but there is also a reference to the collection of 158 constitutions, of which only the *Constitution of Athens* survives to us, through a papyrus find. The statement that "Theophrastus treated the subject more fully" might seem odd in face of possession of the full text of Aristotle's *Politics*, but Theophrastus is credited, in Diogenes' list of his writings (5.42–50), with a multiplicity of writings on political subjects, including a *Politics* in 6 books.

> subject more fully, discussing the forces and occasions of political change, and their control as circumstances demand. Among the alternative ideals of conduct they gave the highest place to the life of retirement (*vitae degendae ratio quieta*), devoted to contemplation (*contemplatio* = θεωρία) and to study (*cognitio* = ἐπιστήμη). This was pronounced to be most worthy of the wise man, as most nearly resembling the life of the gods.[19] And these topics they handle in a style as brilliant as it is illuminating. Their books on the subject of the chief good fall into two classes, one popular in style, and this class they used to call their exoteric works (*quod* ἐξωτερικόν *appellabant*); the other more carefully wrought (*limatius*).[20] The latter treatises they left in the form of note-books (*commentaria*). This distinction occasionally gives them an appearance of inconsistency; but as a matter of fact in the main body of their doctrine there is no divergence, at all events among the philosophers I have mentioned, nor did they disagree among themselves (trans. Rackham).

So there we have it, I think. This speech of Piso's, whether or not it be deemed anachronistic from the perspective of 79 BC, fairly clearly exhibits at least generic knowledge, on Cicero's part, writing in the mid-40's, of Aristotle's "esoteric" *commentaria* as well as of his more polished, exoteric works, and of the distinction between them. Having established this much, we may turn to look at a number of examples of more particular doctrines under each of the three headings distinguished above, to see how Cicero's (and presumably also Antiochus') acquaintance with the treatises and doctrines of Aristotle works out in practice.

3.1 *Physics*

On the basic question of the first principle or principles, we can deduce from a passage of the *Tusculan Disputations* (1.70) that Cicero was at least aware of the difference between Plato's Demiurge and Aristotle's God. Here, however, we cannot assume that we have to do with the first unmoved mover of *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*), but much more probably the divinity as set out in such a work as the lost dialogue *On Philosophy*:

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19 This would seem to refer to the latter part of *Nicomachean Ethics* 10, chapters 6–9, in at least some form.

20 This, it must be said, is a remarkably complimentary term for the style of the extant school treatises; it may be the language of one who has not dipped into them very extensively!

> When we behold all these things [sc. the chief beauties of heaven and earth] and countless others, can we doubt that some being is over them, or some author, if these things have a beginning, as Plato holds, or, if they have always existed, as Aristotle thinks, some governor (*moderator*) of so stupendous a work of construction? (Trans. King.)

The main point to note, however, is that Cicero is aware of Aristotle's assertion, as against Plato's scenario as set out in the *Timaeus*, of the eternity of the world. The precise nature of its first principle is not specified, but, since the context is an encomium of the mind of man, we may reasonably conclude, I think, that the Aristotelian god is assumed here to be an intellect.

A rather more complicated scenario is presented to us, in an admittedly polemical context (in the person the Epicurean spokesman C. Velleius), in *On the Nature of the Gods* 1.33, where Velleius is presenting a critique of the views of other philosophers on the nature of the divinity:

> Aristotle causes much upheaval, in dissenting from his master (*multa turbat a magistro suo Platone dissentiens*),[21] in the third book of his treatise *On Philosophy*, where at one moment he ascribes absolute divinity to intellect, at another represents the world itself as divine, at another places the world under the dominion of some other power, to which he assigns the function of guiding and preserving, by means of a kind of retrograde movement (*replicatione quadam*),[22] the world's motion, and at another speaks of the celestial heat (*caeli ardorem*) as God, not understanding that the heaven is a part of that world to which he has himself given the title of God elsewhere. How, moreover, could the divine consciousness of the heaven be maintained when moving at such speed? And where will a place be found for the great number of other gods, if we also count the heaven as God? When he further declares that God is incorporeal (*sine corpore*), he deprives him of all consciousness, and

21 I must say that I see no reason to insert a *non* before *dissentiens*, as it seems to me that it would suit Velleius' argument to maximize dissent between his opponents. It is no doubt true that Antiochus, Cicero's chief source, would not wish to allow major disagreement between Plato and Aristotle, but we may take it, I think, that Cicero is, for rhetorical purposes, being original here.

22 This will doubtless be the motion of the sphere of the fixed stars, countering the movements of the planets.

> also of forethought; besides, if God has no body, how can he be moved? On the other hand, if he is constantly in motion, how can he know peace and happiness? (Trans. Brooks, emended.)

This is all, as I have said, highly polemical, but behind it, I think, we may discern a glimpse of Aristotle's theological doctrine at an interesting stage of development. On the one hand, it would seem that, at the time of composing the dialogue *On Philosophy*, he regards the heavens, and the divinities within them, including the chief god, which he identifies as an intellect, residing in, or even identical with, the outermost circle of the heavens (that of the fixed stars), as composed, not yet of aether as a fifth substance, but rather of the purest kind of fire—that being the most natural interpretation of the expression *caeli ardor*[23]—and yet also, it would seem, describable as "incorporeal." This may seem a rank contradiction, but in fact, as I have had occasion to point out elsewhere,[24] primarily in connection with Philo of Alexandria, ancient thinkers did not necessarily draw the line between corporeal and incorporeal just where we would: there is a certain amount of evidence, going back to such an Old Academic figure as Heraclides of Pontus, and amply exemplified in Philo, that ἀσώματος, incorporeal, can mean merely "free of contamination by the sublunary elements," while the substance of the heavens, whether pure fire, πνεῦμα, or αἰθήρ, can be regarded as both incorporeal and sentient, even divine.[25]

This is what we observe, I think, in a passage from later in the *On the Nature of the Gods* (2.42), where the speaker is now the Stoic Balbus. He has just been expounding the Stoic theory of pure fire as the substance of the heavens, and now adduces an argument of Aristotle's (presumably still from the dialogue *On Philosophy*) which once again indicates that he has not yet arrived at the notion of aether as a fifth substance distinct from fire:

> Consequently, since the fire of the sun resembles the fire which is in the bodies of animate beings,[26] the sun also must be animate, and so indeed

23 I am here in agreement with Hahm 1982.

24 Dillon 1998.

25 There is a most significant passage, I think, in the *On the Soul* (1.2, 405a7), where Aristotle characterizes the Atomist definition of the soul as follows: "And so some have thought the soul to be fire; for this is composed of the finest particles, and is the most incorporeal (ἀσωματώτατον) of all the elements."

26 He has just emphasized (2.41) that the fire that enlivens the body, as opposed to ordinary fire, which is destructive, is preservative and nourishing.

> must the other stars, as they have their origin in the celestial glow which is called aether or heaven (*aether vel caelum*). Now since some forms of life are developed upon the earth, others in the water, and others in the air, it is, according to Aristotle, absurd to suppose that no animate existence is produced in that part which is best fitted for the production of what is animate. But the stars occupy the region of aether (*in aethere*), and since that is highly rarefied, always in motion, and of potent quality, it is inevitable that the animate existence which is produced in it should be of the keenest sensitiveness and the readiest mobility. Since, therefore, the stars are produced in that region, it follows consistently that they possess feeling and intelligence, and by this means it is proved that they ought to be ranked among the number of divine beings (trans. Brooks).

Here the substance of the heavens is indeed referred to as *aether*, but from the Aristotelian argument that is adduced (a version of which appears also in Philo, *On the Giants* 7; 11; *On Dreams* 1.135) it can be seen that we are still confronted with a four-element universe (since the argument involves living things arising from each of the elements), albeit that fire takes on two very different forms, above and below the moon.

However, it is plain that Aristotle would not long rest content with this awkward distinction between celestial and sublunary fire, and we can see from another Ciceronian passage—still it would seem, from some exoteric work or other—that the postulation of a "fifth substance" was made, and that this development was known to Cicero. Let us turn now to a passage of the *Tusculan Disputations* (1.22),[27] where the subject of discussion is the nature of the soul. Cicero has just been reporting the views on the nature of soul by Aristotle's pupil Dicaearchus, and now continues:

> Aristotle, who far excels everyone—always with the exception of Plato—in intellect and industry (*et ingenio et diligentia*), after grasping the conception of the well-known four classes of elements, from which he held that all things arise, considers that there is a special fifth nature (*quintam quandam naturam*), from which comes mind; for mind reflects and foresees and learns and teaches and makes discoveries and remembers and a multitude of other things: mind loves, hates, desires, fears, feels pain and joy. These and similar activities are to be found, he thinks, in none of the

27 And see also ibid. 30 and 65–66—in the latter part of which he quotes from his own (lost) *Consolation*, (written to console his grief at the death of his daughter Tullia), to the effect that the soul is fashioned from the "fifth substance," and therefore divine.

> four first classes; he employs a fifth class without a name, and accordingly applies to the actual soul a new term, ἐνδελέχεια, descriptive of a sort of uninterrupted and perpetual movement (trans. King, slightly emended).

Here we have an interesting situation: the fifth element—*not* here identified as *aether*, but declared to be anonymous (*vacans nomine* = ἀκατονόμαστον)—is associated, not with the substance of the heavenly bodies, as in esoteric treatises such as the *On the Heavens* (1.2–3)or *Meteorology* (1.2), but rather with that of the soul, as it was, for instance, by Aristotle's erstwhile colleague in the Academy, Heraclides of Pontus (Frs. 98–99 Wehrli).[28] There is also a vague suggestion here that it may be incorporeal, as it is the substance of mind. This is plainly the Aristotle of the exoteric works—we might think of a dialogue such as the *Eudemus*—not the Aristotle of the *On the Soul*.

And secondly, we have Cicero's curious confusion of Aristotle's distinctive theory of ἐντελέχεια as perfected actuality, as developed in the *On the Soul* to characterize the soul, with the term ἐνδελέχεια, meaning "continuity" or "continuous existence"—not used at all by Aristotle, though it is by his contemporary Menander (Fr. 744 Kock). Cicero is certainly not the only one to make such a confusion; we find it also, a few generations later, in Philo of Alexandria (*On Dreams* 1.31), also referring to intellect (*nous*) and soul, and later again in the doxographic tradition. However, in the doxographic report of Epiphanius of Salamis, in his *Against the Heresies* (3.31), we may discern a clue to the source of the confusion, since Epiphanius seems to credit the report that "Aristotle thinks that the soul is the ἐνδελέχεια of the body" to the later Peripatetic Critolaus, whose work would be well known to Antiochus and to Cicero (what sources Critolaus, in his turn, had access to must remain an investigation for another day!).[29]

If we turn, lastly, to the question of fate and free will, Cicero has no hesitation, in his essay *On Fate* (39), in ranking Aristotle with those, such as Democritus, Heraclitus, and Empedocles, "who deem that everything takes place by fate, in the sense that this fate exercises the force of necessity", a view that must surely stem from some doxographic report by a later Peripatetic such as Critolaus, as it greatly oversimplifies Aristotle's position—though such a doctrine could be

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28 It is also so celebrated at *On Goals* 4.12, where the Stoic Zeno is being criticized for not following the Peripatetics in the postulating of a "fifth substance, as the source of reason and intellect."

29 Of course, the tendency, in (at least) later ancient Greek, as in modern Greek, to pronounce a *t* following an *n* as a *d* would have greatly assisted the confusion in later times.

derived from such a text as *On Interpretation* 9. It certainly takes no account of the discussion of voluntary action in *Nicomachean Ethics* 3.

3.2 *Logic and Rhetoric*

As regards the second division of philosophy set out above, that of the science of speech, which may be taken to include both logic and rhetoric, the latter a topic particularly dear to Cicero's heart, we have already considered above a number of key passages, in connection with illustrating the complicated problem of what Cicero had actually read. The apparent allusion to the *Rhetoric* is repeated at *On Goals* 2.17, where Cicero's interlocutor, L. Manlius Torquatus, has just declined to indulge in any more dialectical interchanges, since, as he himself declares (in notable contrast to the Socrates of old!) that he prefers continuous discourse (*perpetua oratio*). Cicero interprets this, reasonably, as a preference for rhetoric over dialectic, and continues:

> That is the view of Zeno the Stoic. He used to say that the faculty of speech in general falls into two departments, as Aristotle had already laid down; and that Rhetoric was like the palm of the hand, Dialectic like the closed fist; because rhetoricians employ an expansive style, and dialecticians one that is more compressed (trans. Rackham).

We appear once again to have a reference to the opening of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, but again we must recognize that Aristotle may have made this rather obvious distinction in any of a number of exoteric works. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in the next generation, certainly knew our *Rhetoric*,[30] but by his time Andronicus' "edition" will have been generally available. It may well be the case, however, that Aristotle's rhetorical works never passed out of use in the Hellenistic age to the same extent that more technical works, such as the *Metaphysics*, the *Physics*, the work *On the Soul*, or the *Generation of Animals* would seem to have done.

As for logic proper, the books comprising our *Organon* do not seem to play any part in Cicero's repertoire, but in the case of the *Topics* we are faced with an interesting problem.[31] Cicero composed a *Topics* of his own, and in that connection he presents us with a conundrum. In the preface, he tells us—or rather tells his friend C. Trebatius, at whose insistent request the book was written—that the work was composed as a consequence of Trebatius' finding a copy of Aristotle's *Topics* in Cicero's library at his Tusculan villa, in the

30 Cf. *To Ammaeus* 6–8; 11–12.

31 On this work, see Reinhardt 2003.

summer of 44 BC, and, after Cicero had described to him what the book was about, begging Cicero to teach him its contents. Cicero's story is that, since he was seriously pressed for time, he endeavoured to meet this request by composing an account of the subject-matter of the *Topics*, from memory, while on board ship from Velia to Rhegium, on his way to Greece. In fact, the book bears only the vaguest resemblance to Aristotle's *Topics* (though it is plainly dependent on Greek sources), and we are left wondering what is going on.

It seems to me that, since the book is dedicated to Trebatius, the story of his finding a copy of the *Topics* in Cicero's library cannot be pure invention, but there remains the possibility that the book in Cicero's library was not our *Topics*, but rather one or other of the works listed above from Diogenes' list, such as the "Topics, criticizing the Definitions, in 2 books." What adds to the mystery, however, is that Cicero declares that he is aware that "all but a few philosophers are ignorant of the work," and this "despite the unbelievable charm and richness of its style" (*incredibili quadam cum copia tum suavitate*)—which could hardly be said of the work available to us. A possible solution to the conundrum might be that Cicero, though possessing this work, has not actually got around to reading it, though he has acquired a general notion of its contents, and, counting on the fact that Trebatius is not going to read it either, has simply here concocted a farrago of "commonplaces of argument" derived from his own experience of the Roman legal system.

3.3 *Ethics*

Lastly, let us turn to the subject of ethics, which is, after all, the part of philosophy that most concerned both Antiochus and Cicero. We may begin with a passage in *On Goals* (2.19), where Cicero, in a polemic against the Epicurean Torquatus, is setting out various formulations of the end or goal of goods: "'Many distinguished philosophers have as a matter of fact thus interpreted the ultimate Good as composite. For instance, Aristotle combined the exercise of virtue with well-being lasting through a complete lifetime (*virtutis usum cum vitae perfectae prosperitate coniunxit*)." This could be taken as a brief summary of the doctrine of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, but it need not betoken any detailed acquaintance with that work. Such a position could have been set out in a work such as the dialogue *On Philosophy*—or indeed it could derive from a doxography provided by a later Peripatetic, such as Critolaus.

Let us turn next to a later passage of *On Goals* (4.16–18), where, in confutation of the Stoics, Cicero is presenting the Antiochian view of the doctrine of the Old Academy and Peripatos, or more specifically, of Xenocrates and Aristotle. After declaring that these two start out from the same ethical

first principles as do the Stoics later, the "first things according to nature," or τὰ πρῶτα κατὰ φύσιν (*prima naturae*, in Cicero's Latin), he proceeds to give a summary of their position. As this account does not accord particularly well with Aristotle's surviving views, we may perhaps conclude that it appeared in one or other of his exoteric works, perhaps the dialogue *On Philosophy*, but more probably, in view of the special position accorded to the virtue of justice in the development of an ethical system, the treatise *On Justice* (with which, as we have seen above, Cicero was acquainted):

> Every natural organism aims at being its own preserver, so as to secure its safety and also its preservation true to its specific type (*omnis natura vult esse conservatrix sui, ut et salva sit et in genere conservetur suo*). With this object, they declare, man has called in the aid of the arts to assist nature; and chief among them is counted the art of living, which helps him to guard the gifts that nature has bestowed and to obtain those that are lacking. They further divided the nature of man into soul and body. Each of these parts they pronounced to be desirable for its own sake, and consequently they said that the virtues (or excellences) also of each were desirable for their own sakes; at the same time they extolled the soul as infinitely surpassing the body in worth, and accordingly placed the virtues also of the mind above the goods of the body. But they held that wisdom is the guardian and protectress of the whole man, as being the comrade and helper of nature, and so they said that the function of wisdom, as protecting a being that consisted of a mind and body, was to assist and preserve him in respect of both.
>
> After thus laying the first broad foundations of the theory, they went on to work it out in greater detail. The goods of the body, they held, required no particular explanation, but the goods of the soul they investigated with more elaboration, finding in the first place that in them lay the germs of Justice; and they were the first of any philosophers to teach that the love of parents for their offspring is a provision of nature; and that nature, so they pointed out, has ordained the union of men and women in marriage, which is prior in order of time, and is the root of all the family affections. Starting from these first principles they traced out the origin and growth of all the virtues. From the same source was developed loftiness of mind, which could render us proof against the assaults of fortune, because the things that matter were under the control of the Wise Man; whereas to the vicissitudes and blows of fortune a life directed by the precepts of the old philosophers could easily rise superior.

> Again, from the elements given by nature arose certain lofty excellences, springing partly from the contemplation of the secrets of nature, since the mind possessed an innate love of knowledge, whence also resulted the passion for argument and for discussion; and also, since man is the only animal endowed with a sense of modesty and shame, with a desire for intercourse and society with his fellows, and with a scrupulous care in all his words and actions to avoid any conduct that is not honourable and seemly, from these beginnings or germs, as I called them before, of nature's bestowal, were developed temperance, self-control, justice and moral virtue generally in full flower and perfection (trans. Rackham).

Here we find the exposition of a pre-Stoic οἰκείωσις theory attributed by Cicero, no doubt following the lead of Antiochus, to an amalgam of Xenocrates (perhaps making use of such works as his treatises *On Wisdom*, in 6 books, *On Virtue*, and *On the Good*) and Aristotle, perhaps borrowing from the above-mentioned treatise *On Justice*, as well as such a work as *On the Good*, in 3 books, listed by Diogenes Laertius. Unless we are prepared to dismiss this as pure fantasy on Antiochus' part, I think that we may accept that we are being given an insight into Aristotle's ethical theory at an earlier stage of his development. We can discern here, I think, a theory of the origins of the concept of justice in the development of basic family ties, between parents and offspring, and siblings with each other—designed, perhaps, to supplant that of Plato in the *Republic*, which sees justice as something internal to the individual soul.[32]

Cicero is also perfectly well aware of the distinction between Stoic ἀπάθεια, or total rejection of passions, and Peripatetic μετριοπάθεια, or moderation of the passions. He refers to the distinction in *Tusculan Disputations* 3.22, though not attributing the latter explicitly to Aristotle, but rather to the Peripatetics in general:

> This is how the Stoics state the case [sc. against any passion whatever], reasoning in a way that is unduly intricate. But the subject needs expansion and stating with considerably greater amplification. Nonetheless, we must above all make use of the opinions of thinkers who in the method they use and the opinion they adopt show a highly courageous and so

32 We can discern interesting traces of such a theory, I think, in such passages of the *Nicomachean Ethics* at 5.6, 1134b8ff., or 5.11, 1138b2–14, where the basic nature of justice within the family is being discussed, and in the latter of which Plato's theory is being criticized.

> to speak manly spirit. For the Peripatetics, friends of ours as they are and unequalled in resourcefulness, in learning, and in earnestness, do not quite succeed in convincing me of their "means" (*mediocritates* = μεσότητες) in respect of either disturbances or diseases of the soul. For every evil, even a moderate one, is an evil; but our object is that there should be no evil at all in the wise man. For as the body, even if moderately ailing, is not healthy; so in the soul the so-called "mean" falls short of health (trans. King, slightly emended).

Here Cicero, doubtless following the Stoicizing stance of Antiochus, manifests a certain hostility to the Peripatetic doctrine, in the process subjecting it to serious distortion—it is a false analogy to compare an Aristotelian mean to a state intermediate between perfect health and serious illness! He could conceivably be drawing on *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.6–9 here, but it is much more likely that he is dependent on the doxographic tradition.

4 Conclusion

We can see, I think, from this survey of Cicero's use of Aristotle that the question of what Aristotle he knew, and how far he actually made active use of certain treatises, particularly "esoteric" ones, of which he at least knows the names, is far from an easy one to settle. Certainly, Cicero has a great respect for Aristotle, both as a towering and many-faceted intellect, and as a master of both rhetorical theory and prose style, but the more "spiny" details of Aristotelian philosophy simply failed to engage him.

If the "esoteric" works were indeed being restored to public, or at least scholarly, attention in Cicero's lifetime (Antiochus, of course, was dead before these developments occurred), as the evidence suggests that they were, one would have to conclude that this development largely passed him by. As has been pointed out by many scholars, although Andronicus should have been active at least by the 40's, Cicero shows no knowledge of him. There are two philosophers of the younger generation that he does know of who turned from Platonism to Aristotelianism, Aristo and Cratippus, both pupils of Antiochus (to the latter of whom he entrusted the philosophical education of his son Marcus in Athens, cf. *On Appropriate Actions* [*De officiis*] 1.1–2), but he shows no sign of knowing under what stimulus they might have been induced to make such a switch. As we have seen, he exhibits some knowledge of esoteric treatises, or *commentaria*, such as the *Topics* or the *Nicomachean Ethics*, but

when it comes to the point, it is not easy to discern how carefully he read them. On the whole, Cicero seems to be stuck just before the dawn of the new era, when, as Lucian amusingly remarks a century and a half later (*Philosophies for Sale*, 26), if you buy Aristotle, you can get "two for the price of one."[33]

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33 That is to say, the Aristotelian philosopher is *diplous*, "double," as he has an exoteric aspect and an esoteric one.

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CHAPTER 10

The Appropriation of Aristotle in the Ps-Pythagorean Treatises

Angela Ulacco

1 Introduction

The Ps-Pythagorean treatises mark an important step in the reception of Aristotle in antiquity. This is at least the impression we get if we consider that Paul Moraux devoted a whole chapter of his *Aristotelismus bei den Griechen* to the reception of Aristotle's philosophy in these texts.[1] Moraux detected a remarkable presence of quotations and allusions to Aristotle's works, both the so-called school treatises and the more popular works, in several of these texts. According to him, the authors of these pseudoepigrapha share with the Platonists of the first century BC and the first century AD the need to combine "ancient" authoritative doctrines to answer problems raised by Hellenistic philosophers. More recent studies have shown that the Ps-Pythagorean treatises are of a piece with the post-Hellenistic approach to Aristotle.[2] More directly, the authors of these texts, or at least some of them, may have been among the first to engage critically with Aristotle. However, their aim was not to interpret Aristotle but rather to appropriate some of his doctrines for the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition.

Before looking in detail at how the appropriation of Aristotle is realized in these texts, it may be useful to recall some general features of the apocryphal Pythagorean literature. The Pythagorean corpus transmitted to us is remarkably varied and is the result of a plurality of approaches and styles, as well as of a variety of aims.[3] Within this body of letters, collections of precepts, poems, and doxographical accounts, it is possible to isolate a distinctive group of philosophical treatises. These are composed in the same language: an artificial Doric Greek employed with the intention of imitating the ancient dialect as it was used in Magna Graecia at the time of the ancient Pythagoreans.

1 Moraux 1984: 605–685.

2 Bonazzi 2013a: 385–386.

3 For a general overview on aims, strategies and methods of the Ps-Pythagorean literature, see Centrone 2014; Ulacco (forthcoming).

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A magniloquent style and the use of poetic and rare words also contribute to an archaic patina and suggest an ancient Pythagorean origin. In most cases, the texts are attributed to Pythagoreans of the second generation, active in the fifth and fourth century BC. Among them, we recall Philolaus of Croton, Timaeus of Locri, Archytas of Tarentum, and Ocellus of Lucania. It remains difficult to establish whether these texts are the product of at least a single philosophical circle if not a single personality, or whether they can be traced back to philosophers promoting different or even competing ideas of Pythagorean philosophy.[4]

The common philosophical substratum of these texts is a theory of two supreme principles: a principle of definiteness and a principle of indefiniteness. The interaction of these principles is assumed as the explanatory model for each domain of knowledge, from the physical to the ethical, since the two principles are held to rule each level of reality. There is now a broad consensus on dating most of these treatises to the period from the first century BC to the first century AD. Their philosophical context is the emergence of a dogmatic type of Platonism. Affinities have been detected particularly with the extant evidence for Eudorus of Alexandria, whose activity can be dated to the middle of the first century BC and whose interest in Pythagoreanism is well documented.[5] Moreover, the assimilation of Aristotelian ideas in some Ps-Pythagoreans texts presupposes the earliest exegetical activity on Aristotle's school treatises, especially the *Categories*.[6]

The Doric Pythagorean pseudepigrapha share a philosophical method that is prominent in much post-Hellenistic philosophy and literature. Many if not most post-Hellenistic authors returned to the ancients and claimed to find their own philosophical claims in their works. Among the ancients, Plato occupied a special position of authority. However, the authors of our texts went further than this: they thought that Plato's philosophy was a source of truth because he had an ancient, that is, Pythagorean, pedigree. Given the absence of original Pythagorean writings, at least of writings dealing with the philosophical topics in which our authors were interested, they created a corpus of Pythagorean texts in order to demonstrate that these works served as model not only for

4 For the "Pythagorean" identity of the authors of the apocryphal texts, whether their interest in Pythagorean philosophy corresponds to a "renaissance" of Pythagorean circles or a dogmatic current in Platonism, I refer the reader to Centrone 2000.

5 On Eudorus, see chapter 11 (The Reception of Aristotle in Middle Platonism). The affinities between Eudorus and the Ps-Pythagorean treatises have been analyzed in-depth by several scholars. Cf. Bonazzi 2005 and Chiaradonna 2009.

6 Cf. Szlezák 1972: 153–157.

Plato but also for Aristotle. Thanks to this step, it became possible for them to present the sources of Plato's philosophy, and therefore Plato's philosophy itself, as a coherent and systematic body of knowledge that included what we now regard as Aristotle's most significant achievements in logic, metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. As a result, Aristotelian ideas regarding the categories, the eternity of the world, and hylomorphism were appropriated for the Pythagorean tradition and made part of the Pythagorean legacy, which was in turn modified by this appropriation.

The consequences of this appropriation for the later reception of Aristotle in Platonism were enormous. Although some rare quotations of these texts can be found in the early centuries of the Roman Empire, it is only with Iamblichus (fourth century AD) that these Ps-Pythagorean texts came to occupy a central place in philosophical discussions. Iamblichus considered these writings the main example of the ancient Pythagorean mastery in all domains of knowledge, which is why he introduced them into the Neoplatonic *cursus studiorum*. This was a momentous decision. The appropriation of Aristotle for the Pythagorean tradition was invoked by the philosophers of late antiquity to demonstrate the essential agreement between Plato and Aristotle. Since both thinkers were believed to have found their source in Pythagoras' thought, their philosophies were considered to be part of the same tradition of truth and their disagreements were reduced to differences in perspective and expression.

With these remarks in place, we can turn to the presence and use of Aristotle in the Ps-Pythagorean texts. Since these texts aim to present themselves as the original product of a Pythagorean teaching, no direct mention of Aristotle (or Plato) is made. This notwithstanding, the authors of these texts are very generous in using Aristotelian terminology, thus committing an anachronism that, at least in our eyes, is evident. It is not possible to determine whether these authors were themselves aware of the anachronism. Consider, for instance, the use of the Aristotelian word "ὕλη" with the meaning of matter, which Ps-Timaeus employs for describing the receptacle in Plato's *Timaeus*. In this case, the strategy may have consisted in showing that the Pythagoreans had already coined certain key terms, which then Aristotle adopted and further developed.

We can make three general observations regarding the presence of Aristotle in the Ps-Pythagorean texts. The first concerns a critical attitude toward Aristotle's ideas and arguments, which presupposes a direct engagement with Aristotle's works. The second has to do with the nature and extent of this engagement. The Pythagorean pseudepigrapha reveal a selective engagement with the Aristotelian corpus. Sometimes Aristotle's works are appropriated by means of direct and explicit references, but at other times they are

appropriated through mere allusions to their doctrines or a subsequent elaboration of these doctrines in a later Peripatetic context. Although it is difficult to make a list of works that were known to the Ps-Pythagoreans, or even a list of works that they considered canonical, we can notice the prominence of the *Categories* and the logical works (most notably, *On Interpretation* and *Posterior Analytics*), parts of the *Metaphysics* (books 1 and 12), *On Generation and Corruption, Physics*, and *On the Heavens*. In addition to these school-treatises, the dialogue *On Philosophy* appears to have been important to the authors of the Ps-Pythagorean texts. The third observation concerns the use that is made of Aristotle's tenets. Several approaches can be noticed in these texts. They range from polemics against Aristotle combined with partial acceptance of some of his doctrines to silent assimilation of his ideas.

Generally speaking, the Ps-Pythagorean texts are not a direct interpretation or an imitation of Platonic or Aristotelian works. Three writings are a partial exception to the rule. The first is Ps-Timaeus of Locri, *On the Nature of the World and of the Soul*, which is an interpretative summary of Plato's *Timaeus*, implicitly presenting itself as the Ur-text of Plato's *Timaeus*. Since this writing is not primarily concerned with an Aristotelian work, I will leave it aside.[7] The second is Ps-Archytas, *On the Universal Account, or on the Categories*, which is based on Aristotle's *Categories*. Ps-Archytas' strategy may very well have been similar to that of Ps-Timaeus of Locri: just as the latter allegedly reveals the Ur-Text of Plato's *Timaeus*, Ps-Archytas is interested in giving us the Ur-text of Aristotle's *Categories*. The third is Ps-Ocellus Lucanus, *On the Nature of the Universe*, which is based on book 2 of Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption* but takes into account also the Peripatetic philosophy of the late Hellenistic age. The last two cases will be the focus of the rest of this chapter.

2 Ps-Archytas and Aristotle's *Categories*

The *Categories* played an important role in the so-called return to Aristotle. In the first century BC the appeal of this text extended considerably beyond the boundaries of the Peripatetic tradition. Platonists too were attracted by this treatise. In particular, the *Categories* drew the attention of Eudorus of Alexandria. Contrary to the Peripatetic philosophers of the first century BC, Eudorus did not use this treatise to develop an overall interpretation of Aristotle's philosophy. Rather, he inserted the doctrines advanced in this work

7 For a detailed analysis of Ps-Timaeus of Locri, see Baltes 1972 and, more recently, Ulacco and Opsomer 2015.

into a Pythagorean-Platonic framework. As a result, Eudorus was probably the first to provide an ontological interpretation of the *Categories*, which was in line with his dogmatic and theological interpretation of Plato. Eudorus' approach to the *Categories* had a significant impact in Alexandria, which was in all likelihood the environment where at least part of the Ps-Pythagorean texts were written. The affinity between what is extant of Eudorus' engagement with the *Categories* and Ps-Archytas' treatment of this treatise has been remarked on by several scholars.[8] Still, it remains difficult to determine not only to what extent one depends on the other, but also the direction of the dependence.

For the purpose of this contribution I will leave this issue aside and focus on Ps-Archytas' work, with a concentration on his approach, strategies, and results in dealing with Aristotle's *Categories*. Let us begin with some basic information. Thesleff's edition of the Ps-Pythagorean writings contains three treatises dealing with the doctrine of the categories, all of them attributed to Archytas.[9] The first, bearing the title *The Ten Universal Formulae* (Καθολικοὶ λόγοι δέκα) (3.10–8.19 Thesleff), is now recognized to be a much later elaboration and therefore does not belong to the group of treatises that provide evidence for the early reception of *Categories*.[10] The second (22.6–32.24 Thesleff), preserved in a Doric version by Simplicius, is transmitted with the title *On the Universal Formulae* (Περὶ τῶν καθόλου λόγων) or with the alternative designation *On the All*, which are also its opening words. This work is also transmitted in *koine* Greek with the title *On the Universal Account*, or *On the Ten Categories* (Περὶ τοῦ καθόλου λόγου ἤτοι δέκα κατηγοριῶν).[11] This treatise deals with the main part of Aristotle's *Categories* (chapters 3–9). The third, which is concerned with the last part of *Categories*, the so-called *postpraedicamenta* (chapters 10–15), is preserved in fragments only by Simplicius with the title *On the Opposites* (Περὶ ἀντικειμένων) (15.9–19.2 Thesleff). We know that Andronicus of

8 See, in particular, Szlezák 1972: 17 and Chiaradonna 2009.

9 In fact, most of the Doric apocryphal treatises are attributed to Archytas. The historical Archytas was a contemporary of Plato and had a great influence in the cultural and political context of his time. For the historical Archytas, see Huffman 2010.

10 See Szlezák 1972: 7–13; 158–188.

11 Hence, we have three titles for the same treatise: *On the Universal Account, On the Ten Categories, On the Universal Formulae*. In all probability, the original title is *On the Universal Account*, where λόγος means "account" or "theory." It conveys the idea that the system of the ten categories provides a universal account of the world. In this sense, it is easy to see how it is possible to shift from the first to the second title, *On the Ten Categories*. The plural λόγοι in the third title must stand for the formulae (sc. definitions) to which the ten categories correspond. For more on the title, see Szlezák 1972: 94–95.

Rhodes considered the first two parts of the *Categories*, the so-called *antepraedicamenta* (chapters 1–3) and *praedicamenta* (chapters 4–9), a coherent treatise but argued that the so-called *postpraedicamenta* (chapters 10–15) had been appended by a later editor contrary to the purpose of the work.[12] Ps-Archytas was probably aware of the early debate on the integrity of the *Categories* and the authenticity of the *postpraedicamenta*. His decision to compose two treatises, based respectively on the *praedicamenta* and the *postpraedicamenta*, may be taken as evidence that he sided with Andronicus in considering the *postpreaedicamenta* a separate work.[13]

Whoever wrote the work *On the Universal Account* had the following overriding aim: to provide a text that could be considered an original, and therefore ancient and authoritative, Pythagorean source for Aristotle's *Categories*. Without being a proper commentary, or a summary of the *Categories*, this text is the most complete among the pre-Plotinian works in our possession that testifies to an engagement with Aristotle's *Categories* outside the Peripatos. Ps-Archytas only partially follows the structure of Aristotle's work and presents the subject in a more systematic way. His treatise can be divided into three sections: (1) an introduction to the subject, with a list of the categories supported by examples and the explanation of the domain to which they pertain (22.9–23.16);[14] (2) a main part where the order of categories according the rules of ontological and epistemic priority is explained (23.17–30.16); and (3) a final section where important clues regarding the domain of application of the categories, their ontological role, and importance for human knowledge is given (30.17–32.23).

In his reworking and systematization of Aristotle's *Categories*, Ps-Archytas shows indifference to certain topics, which he appears to consider unimportant for his purpose. For instance, he ignores the initial distinction between the synonymous, the homonymous, and the paronymous. He also glosses over the distinction between primary and secondary substances. By contrast, he supplies points that in Aristotle's text are missing, giving an explicit answer to the question of the subject matter of the *Categories*. He claims that he will

12 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 379.9.

13 I am assuming that the same person is the author of the treatises *On the Universal Account* and *On the Opposites*, but I cannot rule out that two different authors wrote them. At any rate, the separation into two treatises of the materials and ideas transmitted in the *Categories* testifies to some knowledge of the ancient debate on the integrity of the *Categories*.

14 All references are made using Thesleff's pagination.

deal with the universal *logos* "by which man acquires an exact knowledge of reality." The *logos* is "what is composed of thought and speech: thinking is what is signified, whereas speech is what signifies" (καὶ διάνοιαν μὲν εἶναι τὴν σημαινομένην, λέξιν δὲ τὴν σημαίνουσαν, 22.11–12). The idea is that the whole of the categories constitutes a *logos*, that is, a whole account or a system by which humans can understand reality. There is, by Ps-Archytas' lights, a correspondence between thought, speech, and reality. The epistemological component of this assumption has to be taken seriously, given that Ps-Archytas returns to it at the end of the treatise (31.30–32.33). He claims, in particular, that human beings are the rule and standard of knowledge (κανών ἐστι καὶ σταθμὴ τῆς ὄντως ἐπιστήμης, 31.32–32.2). Taking into account these considerations, we can infer that regarding the much-debated question of the subject matter of the *Categories*—whether they concern things, names, or thoughts—Ps-Archytas takes an encompassing view that unequivocally covers all these three items.

After having established the subject matter of his work, Ps-Archytas addresses the question of the logical order of the categories (23.17–24.16). He argues for the following order for the first three categories: substance, quality, quantity. In this context he also argues for the epistemological and ontological priority of the categories of substance. Substance comes first since it alone underlies (ὑποκεῖσθαι) all other categories, and it alone can be thought in itself (καθ'ἑαυτὰν δύνασθαι νοεῖσθαι), whereas the other categories cannot be thought without it. Both the terminology adopted and the doctrine endorsed can be considered broadly speaking Aristotelian, since according to Aristotle substance is the subject of inherence and predication.

Ps-Archytas stresses the ontological meaning of the categories. The consideration of the *per se* (καθ'αὐτό) as a criterion for the category of substance is an Archytean addition. This addition can be fully appreciated against the following background. First, the distinction between absolute or *per se* (καθ'αὐτό) and relative or *per accidens* (πρός τι) derives from an Academic context.[15] Second, Andronicus adopted the distinction between *per se* and *per accidens* predication.[16] Third, Eudorus suggested that the ten categories could be grouped into two more fundamental categories: *per se* and *per accidens*.[17] Admittedly, Ps-Archytas does not use the category of *per accidens* (πρός τι) to define the other categories as Eudorus probably did, but surely he was aware

15 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 63.22–26 (= Xenocrates fr. 15 Isnardi Parente). A similar classification can be found in Plato, *Sophist* 255 C 12–D 7, and Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 247.30–248.14 (= Hermodorus, fr. 7 Isnardi Parente).

16 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 63.22–26. Cf. Griffin 2015: 48–54.

17 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 174.14–16.

of this use as he employs the category of *per se* in connection with substance. Against this background, it is clear that Ps-Archytas is not simply appropriating the doctrine of the categories but he is also completing it. This does not mean, however, that he is critical of Aristotle. While he recognizes the incompleteness of the Aristotelian account, his (main) purpose is to enrich and harmonize it with elements of Academic or Peripatetic origin.

In the treatment of the category of substance, it is possible to detect at least two other important clues to Ps-Archytas' creative attitude toward Aristotle's *Categories*. Ps-Archytas claims that all natural and perceptible substances can be grasped by human thought (22.31–32). Since his discussion does not include a treatment of secondary substances, one may be tempted to infer that according to him the category of substance applies only to primary substances, which are natural and perceptible substances. However, there is a passage that speaks against this restriction. At 30.23–31.5, Ps-Archytas argues that man-itself, or the idea of man, is receptive of the primary significance, i.e. the essence according to the idea (τὸ τί ἐστιν κατὰ τὰν ἰδέαν). By contrast, man-itself does not receive the other categories since the idea of man does not admit of being of a certain sort, a certain size, or in a certain place. For all these qualifications, argues Ps-Archytas, are accidents of natural and corporeal substances, not of intelligible substances. It is evident that Ps-Archytas applies the category of substance not only to the perceptible things but also to the intelligible substances, which he describes in Platonic terms. By contrast, he does not apply the other categories beyond the realm of perceptible substances. In defining the domain of application of the categories in this way, Ps-Archytas goes emphatically beyond the Aristotelian text. He also deviates from Aristotelian doctrine, since Aristotle does not include the notion of an intelligible, partless, and motionless thing such as the idea of man in the *Categories*.

Let us turn to the second clue to Ps-Archytas' creative attitude toward the *Categories*. In explaining the meaning of "substance" (24.16–19), Ps-Archytas claims that substance can be differentiated into matter (ὕλα), form (μορφά), and the combination of the two (συναμφότερον). This tripartition is nowhere to be found in Aristotle's *Categories*. It is, however, an Aristotelian doctrine, which is reminiscent of the distinction advanced in *Metaphysic* 7.3 between three candidates for substancehood: matter, form, and the compound of the two. Modern scholars debate whether we are allowed to read this distinction back into the *Categories*. Surely, Ps-Archytas felt that it was possible to combine hylomorphism with the theory of substance advanced in the *Categories*. Given this assumption, it was quite natural for him to apply the category of substance both to the perceptible things, as compound of form and matter, and to the form in itself. By saying that the category of substance applies both

to the man-itself and to the individual man, Ps-Archytas establishes a connection between (transcendent) ideas and (immanent) forms. It should be noted that the Ps-Pythagorean connection between form and idea is not just a juxtaposition of Platonic and Aristotelian tenets. On the one hand, Plato never suggests that idea and matter are the ontological constituents of bodies. On the other, Aristotle would have never accepted the dependence of the form on a transcendent intelligible idea. But this is exactly what Ps-Archytas does. The overall result is remarkable: the concept of substance as a compound of matter and form and a subject of predication is appropriated by Archytas for the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition. Moreover, the intelligible substance in the 'new' Pythagorean system is not only conceived as idea in itself, but also as form, which is an ontological and immanent constituent of the compounds.

3 Ps-Ocellus and the Aristotelian Doctrine of the Eternity of the World

Aristotle defends the view that the cosmos is ungenerated and imperishable in the first book of the *On the Heavens*, where he also says that he is the first to argue for this position.[18] Arguments for the eternity of the world can be found also in the last book of the *Physics*, where Aristotle argues for the eternity of motion. With different arguments, Aristotle defended the eternity of the world also in his now lost dialogue *On Philosophy*. Despite all his efforts, the thesis of the eternity of the world does not appear to have fared well during the Hellenistic times. Hellenistic philosophers, for all their different positions on cosmology, agreed that the world order is not eternal.

Although the extant evidence is scanty, we observe a change of attitude toward the end of the Hellenistic era. In the Peripatetic tradition, Critolaus of Phaselis (scholarch of the Peripatos in 156/5 BC) was committed to the view that the world is eternal.[19] More importantly, starting from the second century BC, an interest in the thesis of the eternity of the world can be found beyond the narrow boundaries of the Peripatetic tradition. For instance, this thesis is

18 In *On the Heavens* 1.10 Aristotle tells us that all his predecessors, including Plato, considered the universe to be generated. Their disagreement was confined to the question whether the universe was perishable (279b12–14). By his lights, the specific position he defends, namely that the universe is ungenerated and imperishable, is not found in the previous Greek cosmological tradition.

19 See, for instance, Philo of Alexandria, *On the Eternity of the World* 70 (= Fr. 12 Wehrli= 20 B Sharples).

adopted by some notable Stoic philosophers, including Panaetius of Rhodes.[20] The reasons for this change of attitude are complex, but we cannot rule out that the appeal of this thesis is to be linked to a return to the non-literal reading of Plato's *Timaeus*. This reading can be found already in the Old Academy. In the first century BC, Eudorus of Alexandria was a major force in the revival of this interpretation.[21] Interestingly enough, Ps-Timaeus of Locri shared this reading in his treatise *On the Nature of the World and the Soul* (206.11–12).

A full account of the revival of the doctrine of the eternity of the world would go beyond the limits of this chapter.[22] Here I concentrate on how certain Aristotelian arguments for the eternity of the world are appropriated for the Pythagorean tradition in the work that is transmitted to us under the title *On the Nature of the Universe* and is attributed to the Pythagorean Ocellus of Lucania.[23] A reliable date for this work is difficult to establish. Richard Harder has suggested that it was written between the second half of the second century and the beginning of the first century BC.[24] Two important clues have been used to establish this early date: (1) what appears to be the use of Critolaus' arguments on the eternity of the world and the human race, and (2) a reference to Ps-Ocellus' work in Censorinus,[25] which goes back to Varro, who probably used the so-called *vetusta placita*, a doxographical collection composed between 80 and 60 BC. What matters is not so much the dating itself, but rather the consequences we draw from it. For Harder, our work belongs to the late Hellenistic period. By his lights, it is a Hellenistic text.[26] However, the return to the ancient authorities and the attempt to establish a common Pythagorean source for both Plato and Aristotle are conspicuous features of our work that fit well with the post-Hellenistic attitude we have already detected in other Ps-Pythagorean treatises dated between the first century BC and the first century AD. Moreover, the author of this work makes a selective use of Aristotle's school-treatises. More precisely, he combines, in an interesting and original way, some of Critolaus' arguments for the eternity of the world with a selection from the second book of Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*. This use of Aristotle can be taken to be further evidence that our work pertain to the post-Hellenistic return to Aristotle. Indeed, our work may be the most

20 Philo of Alexandria, *On the Eternity of the World* 76–77.

21 Plutarch, *On the Generation of the Soul in the Timaeus* 1013 B.

22 For the revival of this thesis within the Platonic tradition, see Baltes 1976–1978.

23 Critical edition in Harder 1926. The treatise is printed also in Thesleff 1965 (126.3–138.12).

24 See Harder 1926: 149–153.

25 Censorinus, *The Birthday Book* [*De die natali*] 4.3.

26 This position is adopted in Thesleff 1965.

important evidence we have of an early appropriation of the thesis of the eternity of the world by the Platonic-Pythagorean tradition. In light of the above considerations, it is tempting to date the text to the first half of the first century BC. Dating the text to the first half of the first century BC would also make it possible to link Ps-Ocellus to Ps-Timaeus and other authors of Ps-Pythagorean treatises, and possibly connect our work with the revival of the non-literal reading of Plato's *Timaeus*.

Having dealt with the date of the work, we can turn to its contents. The treatise consists of four pieces.[27] Although each of the four parts can be treated as a relatively self-contained section, the composition as a whole is not just a compilation. On the contrary, it is possible to detect a clearly unitary strategy running throughout the work. The first three pieces (chapters 2–43) defend, with different arguments, the thesis of the eternity and indestructibility of the world. The final part (chapters 44–57) draws some ethical consequences from the thesis that the world is eternal. The presence of an ethical section after the three parts devoted to physics reflects the idea of a continuity between physics and ethics.[28]

The work presents itself as opening with the report of a third person, one of Ocellus' disciples revealing the master's words: "Ocellus of Lucania has written the following things on the nature of the universe."[29] In the first part (chapters 2–17), a series of logical arguments is offered in order to prove that the world is eternal in the sense that it is not subject to generation and corruption. No specific physical theory is invoked. Ps-Ocellus' general method is to take into account various positions against the thesis of the eternity of the cosmos in order to show that they lead to contradictory conclusions. At least one argument derives from the Peripatetic tradition. The argument begins with the observation that fire, which is the source of heat, is the cause of its own heat. It continues with the observation that the cause of the perfection of other things is also the cause of its own perfection. From this second observation the conclusion is derived that the world as the cause of the existence of other things

27 For the reconstruction of Ps-Ocellus' work and his argumentative strategy I depend on an article by Andrea Falcon (unpublished). I would like to sincerely thank him for letting me read and use his unpublished work as well as for his precious suggestions.

28 The idea probably derives from the *Timaeus*, where Plato makes a connection between the physical world and the human soul and body, but it becomes a common assumption in Hellenistic philosophy. Ps-Timaeus too, paraphrasing the *Timaeus*, divides his work into a cosmological and an ethical section.

29 13.1–2 Harder; 126.3–4 Thesleff.

must be cause of its own existence and must be eternal and perfect.[30] The argument recalls a testimony on Critolaus reported by Philo of Alexandria.[31] Other arguments in this section may go back, ultimately, to Aristotle's lost dialogue *On Philosophy*. But we cannot rule out that these arguments inspired Critolaus and where known to Ps-Ocellus via Critolaus. The clearest example of this sort of use is the argument that the universe is incorruptible because there is nothing external or internal that could destroy it.[32]

In the second part of our work (chapters 18–37), Ps-Ocellus supports his view that the universe is eternal with a specific physical doctrine. He begins by distinguishing between what is generated and the cause of generation. The latter is what acts and moves (τό τε ποιεῖν καὶ τὸ κινεῖν), whereas the former is what is acted upon and is moved (τό τε πάσχειν καὶ τὸ κινεῖσθαι). Adopting an Aristotelian principle, Ps-Ocellus goes on to claim that the world is divided into two parts, a celestial and a sublunary region. The cosmos as a whole is presented as the result of the causal interaction of these two parts. Moreover, the eternal cycle of generation and corruption is possible only in the sublunary region. That this is a key thesis defended in our work finds confirmation toward the end of the third piece, where Ps-Ocellus sums up the results of the entire physical section, before turning to the ethical discussion. There, he states that one part of the universe consists of a nature that is perpetually in motion while another part consists of a nature that is always passive (τῆς μὲν ἀεικινήτου φύσεως οὔσης τῆς δὲ ἀειπαθοῦς). The former always rules while the latter is always ruled.[33]

Let us continue with the description of the second part of our treatise. It is remarkable that, after having divided the universe into two parts, Ps-Ocellus turns to what happens in the sublunary region, with a concentration on the eternal cycle of generation and corruption. Interestingly enough, he makes use of arguments derived from the second book of *On Generation and Corruption*. In this case, Ps-Ocellus clearly appropriates Aristotle's explanation of the intertransformation of the four primary bodies in terms of primary qualities (hot and cold, dry and moist). He probably felt that this explanation, as well as the

30 13.5–17 Harder; 127.25–128.8 Thesleff.

31 Philo of Alexandria, *On the Eternity of the World* 70 (fr. 12 Wehrli= B 20 Sharples). In the third part of the treatise (chapters 38–43), Ps-Ocellus focuses on the eternity of the human race. Apparently, Critolaus too was committed to this view: see Philo of Alexandria, *On the Eternity of the World* 55–57 (Wehrli fr. 13 = Sharples 20 A).

32 13.24–14–5 Harder; 128.15–24 Thesleff. Cf. Philo, *On the Eternity of the World* 20–24 (= Aristotle, *On Philosophy* 19a Ross).

33 21.15–18 Harder; 135.5–8 Thesleff.

division of the cosmos into two parts, completed and reinforced his arguments for the eternity of the cosmos presented in the first part of the treatise.

Ps-Ocellus is not interested in the treatise *On Generation and Corruption* as a whole; rather, he makes a selective use of its second book. When we look at his selective use of Aristotle in detail, we can add something more on how his appropriation of the Aristotelian text works. Before turning to the intertransformation of the primary bodies, he systematically distinguishes between three components which must be present of necessity in the sublunary part of the cosmos: (1) body (σῶμα), which is the subject of all generated nature; (2) the contraries (ἐναντιότητες), i.e. hot and cold, dry and moist; and (3) the substances (οὐσίαι), i.e. fire and water, air and earth.[34] This tripartition is taken from Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption* (2.1, 329a33–36), which, however, contains a slightly different and more concise list. For Aristotle, there are three principles: what is potentially a perceptible body (πρῶτον μὲν τὸ δυνάμει σῶμα αἰσθητὸν ἀρχή), the contraries, and finally the four primary bodies (fire, air, water, and earth). Ps-Ocellus is not only more precise than Aristotle (he is explicit in naming all four contraries and all four primary bodies) but he also introduces some significant changes to his doctrine. What for Aristotle is a potential sensible body becomes for Ps-Ocellus simply a body, which is conceived of as the recipient and receptacle of everything (πανδεχὲς καὶ ἐκμαγεῖον). Like water which is tasteless and devoid of qualities (ἄχυλον καὶ ἄποιον) yet is capable of receiving the sweet or the bitter, this recipient and receptacle of everything holds the same relation to the things that are generated from it (οὕτως ἔχον πρὸς τὰ ἐξ αὐτοῦ γινόμενα).[35]

It is not possible to explore all the theoretical consequences of this apparently minor modification of Aristotle's doctrine. Here suffice it to note a couple of things. First, in describing the receptacle, Ps-Ocellus uses terminology that goes back, ultimately, to Plato's *Timaeus*.[36] However, he does so without mentioning Plato. Second, at the beginning of the second book of Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*, Aristotle conceives of matter as an underlying substrate that is inseparable from the contraries, i.e. the primary qualities. In this context, Aristotle criticizes Plato for not having explained adequately the relation between the recipient of everything and the elements themselves (2.1, 329a14). He also complains that Plato did not clearly explain whether the receptacle exists separately from the elements (2.1, 329a14–15).[37] Taking these

34 16.1–20 Harder; 130.12–131.6 Thesleff.

35 16.1–7 Harder; 130.12–17 Thesleff.

36 Plato, *Timaeus* 50 C 2; 51 A 7; 72 C 5.

37 For a full treatment of Aristotle's criticism of Plato's receptacle, see Claghorn 1954: 5–19.

things into account, it is conceivable that Ps-Ocellus is here implicitly answering Aristotle's criticism of Plato. One of his aims may be to show that Ocellus of Lucania had already provided a full explanation of the relation between matter and primary bodies. In other words, Ocellus anticipated both Plato and Aristotle. More to the point: his original account contained an implicit answer to Aristotle's criticism of Plato's *Timaeus*. The result is remarkable: the Platonic concept of the universal recipient, which Aristotle rejected, is actually identified with Aristotle's conception of matter and is conceived as potentiality to receive the contraries. In turn, the Aristotelian description of the primary qualities as contraries is appropriated for the Platonic description of Plato's receptacle.

It is time to return to the main purpose of Ps-Ocellus' work, which is a defence of the eternity of the cosmos. We have seen that Ocellus does not engage with Aristotle's arguments for the eternity of the world advanced in the *On the Heavens* 1 and in *Physics* 8. Aristotle's position as it emerges from those texts is a fairly complex one: it requires the existence not only of a special simple body that moves in a circle forever but also of a first unmoved mover. The combination of these two doctrines, and a close study of the arguments offered in the two books listed above, suggests that Aristotle is committed to a strong version of the thesis that the world is eternal. For Aristotle, the world is *of necessity* ungenerated and indestructible. By contrast, the arguments that Ps-Ocellus offers for the eternity of the world commit him to a weaker version of the thesis that the world is not subject to generation and corruption. Note, in particular, that there is no mention of a transcendent cause in his work. Apparently, no external cause is needed either to preserve the universe or its internal arrangement.[38] Rather, he seems to conceive of the universe as a self-maintaining system. The eternal circular motion of the heavens is the cause of the eternal cycle of generation and corruption in the sublunary world. The view that the heavens have a causal influence on the sublunary can be found in the Aristotelian corpus. Yet Aristotle would never have accepted it as an adequate explanation of the eternity of the world. Ps-Ocellus view on this point is probably closer to Plato's *Timaeus*, where we find the claim that world could be destroyed, even if it will never be destroyed.[39]

38 Cf. Ps-Ocellus 20.1–7 Harder (133.28–134.1 Thesleff), where the sun is given as the proximate cause of the continuity of generation and corruption. Aristotle defends this view in *On Generation and Corruption* 2.9–10.

39 Plato, *Timaeus* 41 A–B. According the description of the *Timaeus* the world will never destroyed given the divine benevolence which is responsible for the harmonic composition of the world.

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CHAPTER 11

The Reception of Aristotle in Middle Platonism: From Eudorus of Alexandria to Ammonius Saccas

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1 Introduction

Middle Platonism is a period of philosophical renewal in the interpretation of Plato. This period begins with Eudorus of Alexandria in the middle of the first century BC and concludes with Ammonius Saccas, the teacher of Plotinus, at the beginning of the third century AD.[1] A great many variety of intellectual currents are documented from this time, to the point that scholars have sometimes compared Middle Platonism to a battlefield.[2] There is no single explanation for the emergence of such a variety of positions. At least in part, it is a result of institutional causes. The First Mithridatic War and Sulla's siege of Athens in 87–86 BC led to the closure of the Academy, and the disciples were scattered across the Roman Empire. It was only in AD 176 that Marcus Aurelius established imperial chairs at Athens devoted to the study of Platonism, Aristotelianism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism, and this was not enough to re-establish a new home for Platonic thought. The oral tradition, dominant until then, was gradually replaced by a mode of philosophical transmission operating through textual interpretation. To comment on Platonic texts did not simply entail clarifying what Plato had meant; it could also imply taking up opposing theories or re-appropriating certain ideas in a Platonic context.[3] Beyond their differences, the Middle Platonists shared several assumptions. For example, the belief that the *Timaeus*, considered as the endpoint of the curriculum of the Platonic dialogues, was not only the source of true instruction on the principles of cosmology—which separated the divine transcendent causes from the world—but also of epistemology and ethics. This tripartition, which reconstitutes the Hellenistic divisions of philosophy, was at the origin of

1 For an overview of the problems raised by the use of the label "Middle Platonism," I refer the reader to Michalewski 2014: 9–45.

2 Donini 1990: 85 and Ferrari 2003: 346.

3 Bonazzi 2008.

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a project from the second century AD onward for teaching Plato's thought, now presented as a coherent system of doctrines.

A lexical change underlined this shift. The term Ἀκαδημαϊκός, which originally denoted members of the Academy, became synonymous with "skeptical," referring polemically to the probabilist interpretation of the New Academy rejected by those who turned to the Πλατωνικὴ αἵρεσις.[4] By contrast, the term Πλατωνικός was used to refer to those who admitted that Plato had revealed the truth. Such people wrote commentaries on Plato's texts or taught others how to interpret them. While Πλατωνικός appears in the context of the emergence of a Platonic identity, it is common to label the authors of the first century AD as Middle Platonists, given their concern with interpreting Plato's texts as carriers of the truth. As Plato's philosophy was systematized and presented in a unified form, the comparison with the work of Aristotle became decisive.[5] Thus, the beginning of Middle Platonism coincided with a revival of Aristotelianism, partly due to the discovery of works such as the *Metaphysics* and the *Categories*.[6]

The Platonism of the imperial age made the most fertile use of Aristotelian thought, not just in ethics and logic, but also in physics and theology.[7] The presence of Aristotelian elements in Middle Platonic texts is apparent on a number of levels. In a general way, it is obvious in the borrowing of technical terms such as ὕλη, which is used to denote the χώρα of the *Timaeus*. The seeds of the equation of ὕλη with χώρα are already present in Aristotle. This equation was popularized by Theophrastus (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 26.5–15), and was picked up even by thinkers such as Atticus, deeply hostile to Aristotelian thought. The presence of Aristotelian elements is also obvious in the adoption of a theory of the causes that arose from a general knowledge of Aristotelian theses rather than out of a direct and close reading of the *Physics* or the *Metaphysics*.[8] The enumeration of the causes at work in the production of a technical object, outlined in *Physics* 2.3 (and *Metaphysics* 5.2), was appropriated for Platonism and integrated into an overall interpretation of the *Timaeus* which brought together the theory of the creation of the world by

4 Glucker 1978: 206–225; Bonazzi 2003: 208–211.

5 Karamanolis 2006: 59.

6 On the formation, organization, and circulation of the Aristotelian *corpus*, see chapter 4 (Andronicus of Rhodes and the Construction of the Aristotelian Corpus). For an introduction to Aristotelianism in the first century BC, see chapter 5 (Aristotelianism in the First Century BC).

7 *Pace* Gottschalk 1987: 1144.

8 Sharples 2007: 511.

the demiurge and that of an artefact by a craftsman. The same phenomenon of appropriation of the Aristotelian conceptual apparatus for the Platonist tradition can be observed in the reworking of a Peripatetic concept such as μετριοπάθεια, which was at the heart of Plutarch's and Calvenus Taurus' ethical doctrine. This use, developed in a polemical context, served to demonstrate the natural alliance of Platonism and Aristotelianism against Stoic ἀπάθεια.[9] As Adriano Gioè has shown, Karl Praechter's division of Middle Platonism into two camps, a pro-Aristotelian "eclectic" camp and an anti-Aristotelian "orthodox" camp, does not stand up to closer reading of the texts.[10] Calvenus Taurus, the author of a treatise on the difference between Plato and Aristotle, did not hesitate to prescribe the reading of Aristotle to his students, to iron out their bad habits and especially to recuperate the key elements of Aristotelianism in his own ethical theory.[11]

The chorus of voices within Middle Platonism presents several faces of the reception of Aristotelian theories: from open hostility toward Aristotle, to strategic use of concepts native to the Aristotelian tradition, to the full proclamation of harmony between the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, as in the case of Ammonius Saccas. Over the two and a half centuries of the Middle Platonic period, the reception of Aristotle among the Platonists evolved considerably. In the first century BC, there was no rigid opposition between the exegetical approaches of Platonists and Peripatetics.[12] In the second century AD, by contrast, the revival of dogmatic Platonism was in full flower, as was the corpus of Peripatetic commentaries on Aristotle. Thus the question of the difference between the philosophies of Aristotle and Plato, as well as the prospects of their potential conciliation, was clearly posed. Finally, it is telling that with Ammonius Saccas, in the third century AD, a new approach to Aristotle was introduced. The point is no longer to find out which elements of Aristotle's thought can be occasionally integrated within Platonism, but rather to show that, on the most important points of their two theories, Aristotle and Plato are in agreement. And yet the philosophical project of a full integration of Aristotle into the Platonic curriculum was some ways off.[13]

9 Babut 1996: 21.

10 Gioè 2002: 34.

11 Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 20.4.

12 Chiaradonna 2011: 102.

13 For more on this project, see chapter 16 (Porphyry and the Aristotelian Tradition).

2 Eudorus of Alexandria

Middle Platonism began in Alexandria with Eudorus, whose philosophical activity can be dated to the middle of the first century BC. At the time Alexandria was an important center for Pythagorean and Aristotelian exegesis, as suggested not only by the presence in the city of Eudorus but also that of Cratippus and Aristo, two former students of Antiochus who defected to Aristotelianism.[14] Eudorus insisted on the importance of setting out the transcendent principles that ruled the world,[15] and gave a theological twist to the interpretation of Plato. He also developed an ontological reading of the *Categories* and sought to emphasize the Pythagorean lineage of Plato through a critical analysis of Aristotle.[16] Eudorus' reception of Aristotle is mainly known through the works of Alexander of Aphrodisias and Simplicius. Reconstructing his thought with precision, however, is difficult, given that the information is scarce and second-hand. Simplicius mentioned him in the list of the oldest commentators of the *Categories*, along with the Peripatetics Boethus, Aristo, Andronicus, and the Stoic Athenodorus (*On Aristotle's Categories* 159.30–160.2). On the basis of another passage in Simplicius (*On Aristotle's Categories* 206.10–15), scholars have drawn radical conclusions about Eudorus and his reading of the *Categories*. They have suggested, in particular, that the roots of the anti-Aristotelian current documented by the objections of Lucius and Nicostratus in the second century AD and culminating in the work of Plotinus in the third century AD, goes back ultimately to Eudorus.[17] They have also argued that Eudorus criticized Aristotle for having limited the categories to the sensible world. This interpretation has been considerably nuanced:[18] from Simplicius' testimony we can infer that Eudorus considered that all substances to which the categories of "where" and "when" could be applied were sensible substances, but we are not entitled to conclude that Eudorus thought Aristotle had recognized only sensible substances.

During the Middle Platonic period, two main views on the *Categories* emerged: a critical one (though not necessarily a reading hostile to Aristotle), and an interpretative one. The latter sought to show that all (or most of) the

14 On Cratippus and Aristo, see chapter 5 (Aristotelianism in the First Century BC).

15 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 181.10–19.

16 On this point, and on the Academic roots of Eudorus' reading of the ten categories, see Griffin 2015: 80–97.

17 Praechter 1922: 509–511, Moraux 1984: 509–527, Dillon 1977: 134, Roskam 2011: 37, Karamanolis 2006: 83.

18 See, in particular, Tarrant 2008 and Chiaradonna 2015: 427–429.

categories had already been discovered by Plato, and are revealed in a number of Platonic dialogues—and that in that respect Aristotle was not original.[19] Plutarch adopts this second approach. In his treatise *On the Generation of the Soul in the Timaeus*, he states that *Tim*. 37 B–C offered a first and summary presentation of the ten categories (1023 E–F). In the following generation, we find this interpretation promoted in the *Handbook of Platonism* [*Didaskalikos*], 6.159.43–44. For its author, Alcinous, a summary of categories is offered in the *Parmenides*. Last, but not least, the *Anonymous Commentary to Theaetetus* (col. 68) reads the first three categories (substance, quantity, and quality) in *Theaetetus* 152 D.[20] Arguably, Eudorus adopted the first approach to the *Categories*. He was critical toward Aristotle and did not hesitate to formulate objections, but his challenge to specific points did not amount to an outright rejection of the *Categories* and did not make him a radical anti-Aristotelian philosopher. In fact, his approach to the *Categories* is in line with what we know about the earliest interpreters of the *Categories*. Even the interpreters who engaged with the *Categories* from within the Peripatetic tradition, such as Boethus of Sidon, did not hesitate to criticize Aristotle.[21] What is specific to Eudorus and his approach to the *Categories* is this: when he criticized or even corrected Aristotle, he inserted his interpretation of the *Categories* into a Platonic-Pythagorean hermeneutical context. His ultimate purpose was in fact to demonstrate the doctrinal unity of Plato and Pythagoras more than the coherence of Plato and Aristotle.

Eudorus' exegetical approach to Aristotle finds confirmation in his reading of the *Metaphysics*. From Alexander of Aphrodisias we learn that Eudorus proposed an emendation to the text of *Metaphysics* 1.6.[22] This testimony is interesting, as evidence that the *Metaphysics* was known and read in the first century BC is rare. For sure, Eudorus was one of the first commentators to have taken interest in the *Metaphysics*. Yet one wonders whether he had knowledge of the *Metaphysics* beyond book I. The question remains open to debate. Following a suggestion first made by Jaap Mansfeld, Mauro Bonazzi has advanced the

19 Tarrant 2008: 587.

20 From a paleographical viewpoint, this papyrus is to be dated from the second century AD. It could thus be inferred that the commentary was produced in the same period. However, Tarrant 1983 and Sedley and Bastianini 1995 (in particular 254–256) have suggested that our commentary may have been written in the first century BC. Yet their arguments create more problems than they can solve. Cf. Opsomer 1998; Bonazzi 2008: 34–36.

21 Chiaradonna 2015: 430.

22 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 58.31–59.8; Bonazzi 2005: 144–159.

hypothesis that Eudorus knew *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*), since he inserted Aristotelian theology into a Pythagorean-Platonic context.[23]

3 Plutarch of Chaeronea

The Plutarchean corpus abounds in references to Aristotle, most notably in the *Lives*, where Aristotle is used as a source of historical information and erudite anecdotes.[24] In general, Plutarch seems to have a reasonably good understanding of Aristotelian writings such as the treatise *On the Heavens*, the third book of the *Rhetoric*, the now lost *Constitutions*, the *Problems*, and certain biological treatises (most notably, the *History of Animals*). He probably had access to the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Still, the nature and extent of his knowledge of Aristotle remains controversial.[25] F. H. Sandbach, who has examined systematically all the quotations of Aristotle in Plutarch, concluded that the latter could be said to know for certain only the *History of Animals* and the third book of the *Rhetoric*.[26] By contrast, D. Babut has recently shown that the absence of direct quotation does not prove that Plutarch did not know Aristotle's *Ethics*.[27]

It is likely that Plutarch had only indirect knowledge of the *Metaphysics*. In the treatise *Against Colotes*, where Aristotle is blamed for attacking the Platonic theory of Forms for the sake of polemic only, the *Metaphysics* is not mentioned as being one of the works where Aristotle criticized this doctrine.[28] To be sure, the *Metaphysics* is explicitly mentioned in the *Life of Alexander*, and this is rare enough for a Platonist at the time.[29] Yet a close examination of the relevant passage leads us to the opposite view. In his *Life of Alexander*, Plutarch reports the episode (also recounted by Aulus Gellius)[30] of the exchange between Alexander the Great and his teacher over the propagation of Aristotle's doctrines. Having learnt, during his war in Asia against Darius, that Aristotle had

23 Bonazzi 2005: 152–157.

24 Roskam 2011: 42–43.

25 Babut 1996 and Karamanolis 2006: 92 are inclined to think that Plutarch had good knowledge of many Aristotelian works. Chiaradonna 2011, Donini 2004, Sandbach 1982, and Roskam 2011 remain more cautious. For the *status quaestionis*, see Chiaradonna 2011: 89–95.

26 Sandbach 1982: 207–232.

27 Babut 1996: 6–7.

28 Plutarch, *Against Colotes* 1115 B 8–C 4.

29 Scholars have seen in this mention evidence that Plutarch read this Aristotelian work. See Babut 1996: 7–8.

30 Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 20.5.

published the contents of his acroamatic works, Alexander reproached him for having exposed the secrets of his knowledge. Aristotle replied that he had "both published and not published" his doctrines, inasmuch as his works would remain incomprehensible to the uninitiated.[31] Though the anecdote is recalled in a similar way in Plutarch and Aulus Gellius, the latter extensively quotes Aristotle's reply. Plutarch's shorter version shows merely his own appreciation of the teaching of Aristotle. Aulus Gellius defines the acroamatic works as the texts in which the master exposes his doctrine in a more detailed and subtle manner (*Attic Nights* 20.5.3: akroatika *autem vocabantur, in quibus philosophia remotior subtiliorque agitabatur*). Plutarch, for his part, identifies these works with the *Metaphysics*—as if this were the quintessence of the acroamatic writings—which thus corresponds to what he labels the Aristotelian *epoptics* (ἐποπτικός). He notes, as a sort of conclusion to the anecdote, that the text of the *Metaphysics* is of no use for teaching, as it is a *hypodeigma* (ὑπόδειγμα) intended to be used by those who are already instructed. *Epoptics* (ἐποπτικός) is a technical term employed by Platonists of the imperial age to designate the highest element of the Platonic philosophy, theology. Plutarch uses it in *Isis and Osiris* (382 D 7–E 2) to denote a way of using reason that escapes the understanding of opinion:

> For this reason Plato and Aristotle call this part of philosophy the epoptic or mystic part (διὸ καὶ Πλάτων καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐποπτικὸν τοῦτο τὸ μέρος τῆς φιλοσοφίας καλοῦσιν) inasmuch as those who have passed beyond these conjectural and confused matters of all sorts by means of reason proceed by leaps and bounds to that primary, simple, and immaterial principle; and when they have somehow attained contact with the pure truth abiding about it, they think that they have the whole of philosophy completely, as it were, within their grasp (trans. Babbitt).

To speak of *epoptics* to describe Aristotle's theology suggests that Plutarch situated the reading of Aristotle in a Platonic-Pythagorean perspective.[32] In a recent study, Riccardo Chiaradonna has re-examined the meaning of the term *hypodeigma*, which he interprets as equivalent to *specimen*.[33] Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is thus a condensed and cryptic presentation of an oral teaching

31 Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 7.668 B.

32 On the possible influence of Eudorus on the Plutarchean interpretation of *epoptics*, cf. Mansfeld 1992; Donini 2011; Chiaradonna 2015.

33 Chiaradonna 2015: 431–433.

on the ultimate principles of the world that has already been revealed to the initiated. Yet Plutarch does not appear to be one of them.[34]

A lack of direct knowledge of the Aristotelian text did not prevent Plutarch from making generous use of Aristotle's doctrines. One of the most remarkable examples of this phenomenon is the use Plutarch makes of the conceptual pair of form and matter in interpreting Plato. Appropriation of the general structure of Aristotelian hylomorphism, thought to have a primarily Platonic origin, was common in the Middle Platonic theories, but Plutarch made it more systematic. He took form and matter as operational concepts to account for the link that exists between opposites. The conceptual pair of form and matter is applied equally in the fields of physics (the structure of the elements), cosmology (the creation of time), and ethics (the definition of moral virtue). If we examine these contexts attentively, it appears that Plutarch's borrowings from Aristotle are always made in order to explicate Plato.

Let us review briefly the evidence in each of these three fields. To begin with, hylomorphism is present throughout the physical and cosmological analyses of the *On the Generation of the Soul*. The elementary bodies of the *Timaeus* are considered composite bodies, made up of the matter and the form that it receives.[35] At each stage of the process of the generation of the world, every inferior level of reality is described as the matter of the organizing and forming act of a superior principle.[36] Second, it is the hylomorphism that allows Plutarch, in *Platonic Questions* 8, to develop his own interpretation of the relationship between the real production of the universe by the demiurge and the creation of time. The aim is to state both the reality of a pre-cosmic movement and the simultaneity of the creation of the world and of time. By assimilating the pre-cosmic disorder to a sort of "matter of time" (1007 C), Plutarch defined the creation of time by the demiurge as the imposition of rationality and number on the elements, which are moved by an irrational soul. The ordering of the movements of the pre-cosmic soul corresponds to the geometrical organization of the elements. Finally, the hylomorphic scheme is also at the heart of the moral theory presented in *On Moral Virtue*, whose very first lines (440 D 2–3) show that moral virtue is to be distinguished from theoretical virtue in that "it has as its material the emotions of the soul and as its form reason (τῷ τὸ μὲν πάθος ὕλην ἔχειν τὸν δὲ λόγον εἶδος)." The moderation of the

34 The indirect character of Plutarch's knowledge of Aristotle's theology finds confirmation in a passage from *The Obsolescence of Oracles* (426 D) where the criticism of Aristotle's prime mover is not based on a direct reading of the text.

35 Plutarch, *On the Generation of the Soul in the Timaeus* 1013 C.

36 Thévenaz 1938: 103–113.

emotions derives from the action of rationality on passionate material. As it is impossible to separate matter and form, the suppressing of the emotions ultimately came down to denying the role of reason.[37] The hylomorphic definition of moral virtue is placed in the general context of a refutation of Stoic ethics. More directly, the definition of moral virtue as μετριοπάθεια is not primary an indication of a defense of the Peripatetic thesis.[38] Rather, it is set up in opposition to Stoic ἀπάθεια.

What matters to Plutarch is to defend Platonic dualism, on all levels, and this use of a general, but vague, Aristotelian hylomorphism is functional to the defense of this central dogma of Platonism.[39] Indeed, Aristotelian concepts are appropriated to develop an exegesis of Plato that can rise above the contradictions of Stoic monism. Plutarch believed that Aristotle's philosophy, even if it was in conflict with that of Plato on key points such as the theory of transcendent Forms, was nonetheless the best ally of Platonism against the corporealism of the Stoa, its real adversary.

4 Lucius, Nicostratus, and their Criticism of the *Categories*

The interpretation of the *Categories* remained at the center of philosophical discussions well beyond the first century BC. Yet the Platonists of the second century AD did not undertake a complete and systematic interpretation of Aristotle's treatises, and it is precisely this targeted and specific character of their criticism of Aristotle that makes it difficult to associate Lucius with any defined philosophical current.[40] In his commentary *On Aristotle's Categories*, Simplicius introduces in this way the specific style of the Platonic commentators of the imperial age: "others were content to write only puzzles (ἀπορίας) against what is said: this is what Lucius did, and after him Nicostratus, who appropriated the considerations of Lucius" (*On Aristotle's Categories* 1.18–20). He adds that their engagement with Aristotle was essentially polemical: they provided objections (ἐνστάσεις) to nearly everything said in the book and did

37 Donini 1974: 94.

38 For such an interpretation, see Gréard 1902.

39 Cf. also Froidefond 1987: 202.

40 The reader will find a detailed account of the philosophical affiliation of Lucius in Gioè 2002, who refuted the hypothesis of Zeller—revived in Strange 1987—that Lucius was a Stoic philosopher. Griffin 2015: 108–110, suggests that Lucius was no historical figure, and was perhaps a standard name (invented by Boethus of Sidon) representing the Pythagorean position.

not go about their task with respect, but rather in a violent and shameless manner (*On Aristotle's Categories* 1.20–22). Although it is difficult to differentiate between the positions of Lucius and Nicostratus, Michael Griffin has recently highlighted certain nuances in the nature of their argumentative strategies.[41] The intention of Lucius and his disciples may have consisted in showing that Aristotle's ideas in the *Categories* were insufficient to promote certain fundamental theses of the Platonic-Pythagorean tradition, such as the difference between the sensible and the intelligible world. Nicostratus, for his part, may have underscored the intrinsic weakness of some of the positions defended in the *Categories*, showing, for instance, that the definitions of homonymy and synonymy are not sufficiently precise.[42] Generally speaking, the objections raised against Aristotle, such as those levelled against the *Categories*, remained in the form of specific criticisms up until the first systematic critique was made in Plotinus' treatises *On the Genera of Being* (6.1–3 [42–44]).

5 Numenius, Atticus, and Taurus

One of the primary aims of the Platonism of the beginning of the imperial age was to distinguish itself from Stoicism and its corporealism. This motive remained in place in the following century, but the perspective evolved as the definition of a Platonic identity came to take into account a possible reconciliation with Aristotelianism. At the same time, a debate arose among Platonists of the second century AD as to the extent to which Platonism differed from Aristotelianism and whether the two philosophical outlooks were in fact compatible.

While the pseudo-Pythagorean circles of the first century BC favored an alliance between Aristotle and Pythagoras (one that would be developed in the philosophy of Iamblichus and his successors), this was not the case with Numenius, who is an emblematic author of the Platonic Pythagoreanism of the second century AD. Very little trace of this debate remains in the extant fragments of Numenius. He argued that Aristotle's philosophy must be separated from that of Plato insofar as Plato (unlike Aristotle) was a Pythagorean. His hostility toward Peripatetic philosophy was an aspect of his polemical attitude toward those who betrayed the divine heritage of Plato, expressed in his treatise

41 Griffin 2015: 103–128.

42 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 30.18–22.

On the Dissension of the Academics from Plato (Περὶ τῆς τῶν Ἀκαδημαϊκῶν πρὸς Πλάτωνα διαστάσεως).[43]

Atticus is a representative of the anti-Aristotelian current of the second century AD characterized by the complete refusal of any conciliation between Platonism and Aristotelianism. From the few remaining testimonies, it appears that his critique of Aristotle was of a general nature, resting on what has been called a "confessional anti-Aristotelianism."[44] Excerpts from Atticus' treatise *Against Those Who Claim to Interpret the Works of Plato Through Those of Aristotle* (Πρὸς τοὺς διὰ τῶν Ἀριστοτέλους τὰ Πλάτωνος ὑπισχνουμένους) were transcribed by Eusebius in his *Preparation for the Gospel*.[45] Atticus regarded the Aristotelian rejection of the theory of transcendent Forms and the immortality of the soul as resulting from a simple spirit of strife. He refused the uncreated nature of the world put forward by Aristotle, which went hand in hand with the rejection of divine providence understood as benevolent and mindful divine intervention. The fundamental aim of Atticus' work was not so much to refute Aristotle, but rather to show that Aristotle's doctrine was fundamentally incompatible with Plato's and therefore of no use in the interpretation of Plato. Atticus, like other Platonists of the imperial age, saw Platonic thought according to an organic model, as a living system in which all the elements were interconnected.[46] Thus it was impossible for him to criticize one of the parts without calling into question the whole system, whose spine was the theory of Forms.[47] The virulence of Atticus' critique was not based on a direct reading of the Aristotelian corpus; rather, it was a reaction to readings of exegetes who attempted to unify Plato and Aristotle into a single philosophical position. Even though Atticus drew inspiration from Plutarch's analysis on such fundamental issues as the generation of the world and the definition of divine providence, he did not emphasize the same points. This is because, in his view, the primary opponents of Platonism were not the Stoics or the Epicureans but rather the Peripatetics.[48] According to Atticus, the negligence of Aristotle's god toward the world was even more reprehensible than that of the Atomists: while admitting that there existed an order and a harmony in the heavens,

43 For more on this treatise, see Karamanolis 2006: 127–128.

44 Chiaradonna 2005: 241.

45 For a discussion of who exactly is Atticus' polemical target, see Karamanolis 2006: 156–157.

46 Atticus, fragment 1.19–23 Des Places.

47 Atticus, fr. 9.1–2 Des Places.

48 Atticus, fr. 3.51–57 Des Places.

he cut off the god from the events of the world by denying the existence of a divine solicitude in the sublunary sphere.[49]

The view that the world was produced in time by the divine demiurge was criticized by Calvenus Taurus (*floruit ca.* AD 150) in his commentary on the *Timaeus*. This work is lost, but some excerpts have been preserved by John Philoponus in his treatise *On the Eternity of the World Against Proclus*. Taurus argued that the cosmos did not have a beginning in time. When Plato says that the world is generated (γέγονεν), he means that the world is subject to a perpetual process of becoming, depending on the divine cause. Taurus lists various meanings of the Greek word γενητός. This list would have a great influence on the subsequent (Neoplatonist) interpreters of the *Timaeus*. For Taurus, the word γενητός can be taken as an equivalent of "visible" and of "composite"; it can also indicate what is always in the process of generation and changing like Proteus; finally what is dependent upon an external cause for its existence too is called γενητός.[50] Taurus appears to have had a very good knowledge of the arguments that Aristotle offers in the treatise *On the Heavens* against the cosmology of the *Timaeus*. *Contra* Aristotle (and Platonists like Plutarch and Atticus), Taurus promoted a sempiternalistic interpretation of Plato's cosmogony.[51] In particular, he distinguished between two readings of the cosmological account offered in the *Timaeus*:[52] the first is promoted by those who for religious reasons believe (ὑποτίθεται, 189.6) that the world is generated and preserved only through god's benevolence,[53] while the second is defended by those who know (οἶδεν, 189.7) the real meaning of the Platonic cosmology.[54]

6 Apuleius and Alcinous

Atticus' position is best understood as a reactive attitude to the concordist readings of the second century AD. We find examples of such readings in Apuleius, *On Plato and his Doctrine* and in Alcinous, *Handbook of Platonism* [*Didaskalikos*].[55] Apuleius (*ca.* AD 125–180) was a writer, rhetorician, and

49 On this question and the answer by Alexander of Aphrodisias, see Thillet 2003: 9–16.

50 Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World Against Proclus* 145.13–147.25.

51 Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World Against Proclus* 186.17–189.9.

52 On this point, see Gioè 2002: 360–361.

53 Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World Against Proclus* 123.15–18.

54 Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World Against Proclus* 189.6–7.

55 The identity of the *Handbook*'s author is controversial. Freudenthal (1879: 322–326), identified him with Albinus. Whittaker 1974 demonstrated, on paleographical grounds, that

philosopher. He considered himself a member of "Plato's family" (*Apologia* 60.1), which includes Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Eudemus: "I am not the first ichtyologist, but follow in the steps of authors, centuries my seniors, such as Aristotle, Theophrastus, Eudemus, Lyco, and the other successors of Plato, who have left many books on the generation, life, parts, and differences of animals" (*Apologia* 36.3–4). His treatise *On Plato and his Doctrine*, which is a scholarly introduction to Plato's thought, aims to expose his principal teachings,[56] but his presentation of Plato is imbued with Aristotelian references. To give an example, at the beginning of book one (1.190), Apuleius indicates the existence of three cosmological principles, God, Forms, and Matter; concerning the theory of the Forms, he combines the Platonic theory of transcendent Forms and Aristotelian hylomorphism: the enmattered form (*species*), which is inherent to the sensible object, is the image of a transcendent Form (*Idea*).[57]

The *Handbook of Platonism* of Alcinous is an introductory work, presented both as a summary and a scholarly re-writing of Plato's doctrines. It is typical of the readings that appropriate elements or concepts that are native to Aristotelianism for Platonism. This work is traditionally dated to the middle of the second century AD, but it is possible it was written as late as the end of the second century AD, insofar as its references to Aristotelian doctrines are more accurate than those of other Middle Platonic texts. In particular, concerning the causality of the divine intellect, some relevant parallels could be established with the analysis provided by Alexander of Aphrodisias in his treatise *On the Soul*. A full review of the *Handbook of Platonism* would go beyond the scope of this chapter. Here we are content to provide the reader with an idea of how its author appropriates elements of Aristotle's philosophy for Platonism. Alcinous developed a non-literal interpretation of the generation of the world advanced in the *Timaeus*. According to this interpretation, the creation of the world coincides with the eternal ordering of the soul of the world by the divine intellect. In order to show how these things coincide, Alcinous uses the Aristotelian concepts of potentiality and actuality, which he adapts to the Platonic context in order to support a critique of Stoicism. More directly, he aims to show an error in the Stoic definition of god, which is as much an intellect as the soul of the world, and to make a careful distinction between two

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Freudenthal's thesis was incorrect, and attributed the authorship to a certain Alcinous, who would have lived around AD 150 or 160. Göransson 1995 dismisses the hypothesis, advanced by Freudenthal, of a "school of Gaius," out of which both the *Handbook* and *On Plato and his Doctrine* would come.

56 Apuleius, *On Plato and his Doctrine* 1.189.

57 Apuleius, *On Plato and his Doctrine* 1.192.

levels of reality. For Alcinous, the soul of the world needs a superior reality, an intellect always in actuality, thanks to which it actualizes its intellective dimension—although this actualization does not itself require a temporal process. The passage to actuality of the intellective dimension of the world soul is conceived as an eternal process.[58] In particular, Alcinous seeks to show that the intellectual activity of the world soul is ontologically secondary, and hence that it depends upon a higher principle always in actuality, deriving the principle of its own activity solely from itself.[59] He employs the Aristotelian concepts of potentiality and actuality to show how even an eternal activity such as that of the world soul depends for its exercise upon a superior cause.

Middle Platonism is characterized by the attempt to establish intermediaries between the divine cause and the world, and in this way to reinforce its transcendence. Alcinous conceives of the first intellect as a cause not subject to motion, eternally in actuality, discharged from the task of demiurgic production, which falls entirely to the intellect of the world soul. In order to express the causality of the first intellect, he combines references to Plato and Aristotle. More directly, the activity of the god brings together the Platonic conception of the Good advanced in the *Republic* and the Aristotelian doctrine of the first mover offered in *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*). It is even quite probable that Alcinous had read and assimilated the interpretations of the agent intellect developed by Alexander of Aphrodisias in his treatise *On the Soul*. This merging of the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions shows that for the author of the *Handbook of Platonism*, Peripatetic terms (and even doctrines) really belong to a single, common heritage.[60] The causality of the first intellect is comparable to that of the agent intellect, which, by its own intellective activity, makes the world-soul's intellect an *active* intellect.[61] In this way, the Good communicates to the lower level of reality what it possesses to the highest degree.[62] The first god is an intellect in actuality, which eternally thinks itself.[63] By eternally contemplating itself, the first god not only actualizes the intellect of the world-soul but also produces the Forms. By thinking itself, it produces the Forms and contemplates them. For the first time in the history of philosophy, the Middle Platonic definition of Ideas as "thoughts of god" is combined with the Aristotelian theory of a god thinking himself. This exegetical novelty

58 Alcinous, *Handbook* 10.164.20.

59 Mansfeld 1989: 64–65.

60 Chiaradonna 2015: 438.

61 Menn 1998: 95–97.

62 Alcinous, *Handbook* 10.164. 35–37.

63 Alcinous, *Handbook* 10.164. 29–31.

goes beyond the simple combination of different doctrinal elements, as it implies that the production of Forms is bound to an act of self-knowledge of god. The first intellect thinking itself generates the intelligible realities, which are the paradigms of natural beings. By blending Aristotelian theology with the Middle Platonic theory of Forms, the text opens a new path that thrived in Neoplatonism.

7 Ammonius Saccas

A new step in the history of Platonism was taken by Ammonius Saccas in the first half of the third century AD. According to Hierocles, Ammonius brought to an end the conflicts between the Platonic and Peripatetic schools and revealed the fundamental agreement between the thought of Plato and Aristotle (*On Providence, apud* Photius, *Library*, codex 214, 172a). For Hierocles, Ammonius is the forefather of a whole tradition of interpreting Plato, one that Hierocles himself belonged to, along with his teacher Plutarch of Athens. Willy Theiler has suggested that Hierocles had direct knowledge of Ammonius' thought.[64] It is more plausible that Porphyry was his actual source.[65]

We have very little information about Ammonius Saccas. He left no writings and had his closest disciples swear not to reveal his esoteric teachings.[66] We can only reconstruct his thought with the help of Porphyry and Photius. The latter summarized Hierocles' work *On Providence*, in which Ammonius is evoked at length.[67] When Plotinus encountered Ammonius at the age of 27, after having heard the teaching of the most reputed professors in Alexandria, he reportedly exclaimed that Ammonius was the teacher he was waiting for. Hermann Dörrie deduced from this anecdote that Ammonius was not counted among the famous professors in Alexandria but rather gave his teaching to a few chosen disciples.[68] According to Porphyry, Plotinus' teaching was developed in the spirit of Ammonius. Indeed, he applied Ammonius' method to the investigation of every problem.[69] Still, the details of his method and the content of his teaching remain difficult to determine.[70]

64 Theiler 1966: 37.

65 For more on this point, see R. Chiaradonna's contribution in this volume.

66 Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 3.13–15.

67 Cf. Hadot 1978: 68.

68 Dörrie 1955: 441.

69 Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 14.14–16.

70 Goulet-Cazé 1982: 265–267; O'Brien 1994: 125.

The testimony of Photius appears in two accounts, codex 214 and codex 251. In the first, Photius reports on the introduction of Hierocles' book and quotes the table of contents; in the second, he presents an excerpt from Hierocles' introduction. According to Photius, Hierocles developed his views on providence by relying on Ammonius' concordist interpretation of Aristotle and Plato. But, as George Karamanolis has shown, it is highly probable that, in reporting on Hierocles' work, Photius projected back onto Hierocles his own understanding of the agreement between Plato and Aristotle.[71] Moreover, Hierocles only had general and indirect knowledge of Ammonius. Hence, he must have relied on an intermediate source. His source is likely to have been the Porphyrian treatise on the unity of the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle.[72] Hierocles indicates that Ammonius was the initiator of a new way of interpreting the compatibility of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. According to him, Ammonius, who was "taught by the gods," claimed that there was not only harmony between the two philosophers, but also a deeper unity: "he [sc. Ammonius] has purified the opinions of the ancient philosophers, removed the useless elements that clung to them both, and proved that the mind (νοῦς) of Plato and Aristotle was in harmony regarding the important and most necessary doctrines" (codex 214, 173a, trans. Schibli).[73]

Thus, according to Ammonius Saccas, Aristotle and Plato are in broad agreement with respect to their main doctrines, and they differ only with respect to their form of expression (λέξις). Aristotle and Plato take the same mind (νοῦς) as their starting point and differ only in their form and expression. In this way, an additional step was taken beyond the conciliatory readings of the Middle Platonists who only occasionally borrowed specific doctrines from Aristotle in order to interpret Plato. By his lights, those who opposed the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle fundamentally misunderstood the truth as well as the real intentions of the two philosophers. By contrast, Ammonius opened the way to an interpretation which runs through Neoplatonism; he was, according to Hierocles, "the first to behold clearly the thought of both Plato and Aristotle, and to bring them into one and the same mind, and to hand on to all his pupils a philosophy free from factional strife, particularly the best of his students, Plotinus, Origen, and their successors" (codex 251, 173a).[74]

71 Karamanolis 2006: 194–195.

72 Dörrie 1955, Karamanolis 2006: 195. Cf. chapter 16 (Porphyry and The Aristotelian Tradition).

73 Schibli 2002: 330.

74 Schibli 2002: 335.

Elizabeth De Palma Digeser calls Plotinus the best pupil of Ammonius and the heir to the "philosophy without conflicts" initiated by his master.[75] Furthermore, she considers Ammonius to be a revolutionary thinker who profoundly transformed ancient exegetical methods. It is however unlikely that Ammonius' concordist reading was based on a precise analysis of the text of Aristotle.[76] It is only with Plotinus that an in-depth engagement with Aristotle and the Peripatetic commentaries on his works entered the Platonic *cursus*.[77] Furthermore, it is an overstatement to make Plotinus the herald of a "philosophy without conflicts." If Ammonius insisted on the profound unity between Plato and Aristotle, Plotinus did not follow him down this path. Quite the opposite: his treatises show sufficient points of disagreement with Aristotle. The true heir of the concordist reading of Plato and Aristotle initiated by Ammonius was Porphyry rather than Plotinus.[78]

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75 De Palma Digeser 2012: 17.

76 See Chiaradonna 2014.

77 Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, 14.

78 Cf. chapter 16 of this volume.

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CHAPTER 12

Galen's Reception of Aristotle

R. J. Hankinson

1 Introduction

Galen (AD 129–*ca.* 216) was an admirer of the great men of antiquity. He affected to an exaggerated degree the common Roman theme of a decline from the Golden Age to modern degeneracy, tempered by an equally characteristic hope that things might improve, specifically if people followed his own excellent example. Time and again throughout his work, he compares the slovenly, gross, and sensualist tenor of his own times with the intellectual and moral rigor of the past. To this end he never tires of invoking the great names of that glorious epoch—and while supreme among his intellectual forebears are Hippocrates and Plato, Aristotle too has a position of honor in his intellectual pantheon (as indeed does Aristarchus). His heroes, then, are a mixed bunch. But they are unified, at least in Galen's view, by their commitment to scrupulousness and intellectual honesty.

Nor was this simple lip-service, the deference of youth to age: his admiration is no mere uncritical adulation. From time to time, he will find fault with Plato, and even Hippocrates.[1] The same applies to Aristotle too. Galen greatly admired his work in logic and demonstrative theory, which he considered to be the foundation of all science worthy of the name; and he considered his own masterpiece of functional anatomy, *The Function of the Parts* [*UP*], to be an elaboration and correction of Aristotle's own *Parts of Animals*.[2] Moreover, his physics was also Aristotelian in general form: he adopted the four element theory, and the associated analysis in terms of the four qualities. In *Elements*

1 The case of Hippocrates is complicated by the fact that Galen tends to treat congruence with his own view of what is medically correct as a criterion for deciding between genuine and spurious Hippocratic texts; on occasion he will say that, while Hippocrates omitted some truths, nothing of what he said was actually false.

2 Galen, *My Own Books* [*Lib. Prop.*] XIX 20–1 K. Galen's texts are keyed to the edition of Kühn (Leipzig 1819–31, repr. Darmstadt 1965) where possible for convenience of reference; but at their first appearance I will cite later and better editions (almost all of which have marginal references to the Kühn edition), as well as any English versions. *Lib. Prop.* is most recently edited in Boudon-Millot 2009, and translated into English in Singer 1997.

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according to Hippocrates [*Hipp. Elem.*],[3] he fathers four-quality theory (in a developed, argued form) to Hippocrates; in his great treatise on therapeutics, *Medical Method* [*MM*],[4] he wrote "that all bodies [. . .] are composed of hot, cold, wet, and dry" is an idea "common to virtually all the most reputable doctors as well as to the best philosophers" (he mentions Diocles, Mnesitheus, Dieuches, and Athenaeus among the doctors, Chrysippus and Aristotle among the philosophers); but "I call them 'Hippocrates' elements' because I think it proper to bear witness to him who first propounded and demonstrated them" (*MM* X 462–3 K). This is a typical, indeed ubiquitous, contention. Everything, at least insofar as it relates to physiology and medicine (and that for Galen includes a good deal, as we shall see) ultimately consists in footnotes to Hippocrates.[5]

But as I said, Galen's interests are limited; although he thought of himself, with justification, as a philosopher and a logician (as well as a student of language),[6] he did so because he felt these pursuits were, up to a point, essential to a genuinely scientific medicine. And it is here, consistently with his generally, if not uncritically, syncretistic approach,[7] that Aristotle plays his most significant role. For Galen was, in the useful if vague general typology common at the time, a Rationalist doctor, albeit one committed to the necessity of empirical investigation and confirmation, and that in itself gives him a strong methodological connection with Aristotle. Again, on Hippocrates:

> He thought that one should have a precise knowledge of the nature of the body, saying that this was the source [or principle: ἀρχή] of the whole theory of medicine [. . .] This discipline teaches the very nature of the body, both that which derives from the primary elements, which are mixed among one another as a whole, but also that which derives from the secondary [substances], which are called 'uniform' (ὁμοιομερῆ), and a third in addition to these, namely that from the organic parts. Moreover, one must determine what is the function (χρεία) and the activity (ἐνέργεια)

3 Galen, *Elements according to Hippocrates* I 413–508 K. Edited in De Lacy 1996.

4 Galen, *Medical Method* X 1–1021 K; a Loeb edition (Johnson and Horsley 2011) is now available, but needs using with care.

5 Galen was well aware of there being a "Hippocratic Question" as to which of the treatises circulating under his name were genuine, and he had strong, and ideologically shaped, views on the matter (roughly, those texts which got things right, in Galen's view, are the ones he considers genuine). See Smith 1979.

6 He wrote much on both issues, very little of which survives. Cf. *Lib. Prop.* XIX 39–47 K for logic (and Morison 2008a); for language, *Lib. Prop.* XIX 47–48 K (see Morison 2008b).

7 See Hankinson 1994.

> of each of these for the animal, and not in an untested manner, but as confirmed by demonstration (*The Best Doctor is also a Philosopher* [*Opt. Med.*] I 54–60 K = *SM* 2.2.11–6.22).[8]

The first sentence recalls a passage of Plato that Galen quotes more than once (*Phaedrus* 270 B–D), where he asserts a vague holism; but the language of the latter part is clearly Aristotelian, even if the precise sense of the terminology, both here and elsewhere, may vary. Galen is not above criticizing even his intellectual heroes, and his attitudes to Aristotle are more nuanced (and difficult to pin down) than they are in the case of Hippocrates and Plato. Galen wrote a long treatise on *The Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* [*PHP*][9] which seeks to show that his two heroes spoke, in all important and relevant respects, with one voice. Aristotle, for all the myriad[10] times that Galen mentions him and his followers, is accorded no such exalted position, even though, in many respects, Galen's own positions frequently owe more to him than they do to anyone else. This is because, at least in part, Galen thinks that he gets certain supremely important facts quite wrong, the most important of which concern the seat and transmission of intelligence and sensation, and the mechanisms of animal reproduction. Aristotle, then, is for Galen an ambivalent figure; and Galen's own attitude to him, explicit and implicit, reflects that ambivalence.

In what follows, I will sketch Galen's debts, acknowledged and otherwise, to Aristotle, as well as his divergences from him. I will do so under the following general sections: logic and demonstration, physics and metaphysics, physiology and embryology, and psychology.

2 Logic and Demonstration

Even Galen could not claim Hippocrates as the father of formal logic, although he often says that Hippocrates was writing for a more accomplished generation who didn't need everything spelled out for them, and could have provided firm demonstrations if he had felt like it. This is a theme of his early text *Elements according to Hippocrates* [*Hipp. Elem.*], and consistent with Galen's general contempt for the degeneracy of his own times. Although not one

8 *SM* refers to the 3-volume *Galeni Scripta Minora* (1884, 1891, 1893); this text is also edited in Boudon-Millot 2007.

9 Edited with English translation and notes in De Lacy 1978–80.

10 Almost literally; as van der Eijk (2009: 264) remarks, any search of the relevant terms turns up hundreds of instances in the *oeuvre*.

himself, he shares the standard Middle Platonist view that logic can be discovered (or at least foisted on) Plato;[11] but he is well aware of Aristotle's primacy in the formal investigation of the field. For all his interest and competence in the subject (he wrote 19 books of commentary on the *Analytics* for his own use, *Lib. Prop*. XIX 41–2 K, as well on four on the *Categories* and three on the treatise *On Interpretation*), his real focus was limited to the practical. Logic was worthwhile insofar as it is useful. In this vein, he castigates his contemporary logicians for pointless controversy: "I learned much logical theory from them which I later came to see to be quite useless [...] moreover, I also found that their logical theories conflicted not only with each other but also with common sense" (*Lib. Prop*. XIX 39–40 K),[12] so much so, he says, he would have relapsed into skeptical despair, had he not reflected on the a priori certainty of mathematical proof.

His goal, then, which is recognizably Aristotelian in general form (although it has had a long and not entirely happy subsequent history), is to found empirical science on secure demonstration, ἀπόδειξις, the model for which is Aristotle's account in the *Posterior Analytics*: "the best accounts of scientific demonstration were written by the old philosophers, Aristotle and Theophrastus in their *Posterior Analytics*" (*Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato* [*PHP*] V 213 K).[13] He also learned from the formal treatment of inferential patterns and modality in the *Prior Analytics*. We are fortunate that a short handbook of his, *Introduction to Logic* [*Inst. Log.*],[14] has survived. In it, he deals with both Aristotelian and Stoic logic, finding them complementary (as genuine Middle Platonists like Alcinous do); but strikingly (and uniquely in antiquity) he finds them incomplete—neither is able to model relational inferences of the sort to be found in arithmetic and which (in the form of Euclidian common notions) underpin geometry: A = B, A = C, so B = C, cannot be given an adequate formulation in categorical syllogistic. Galen's treatment of relations is brief, in some ways naïve, and confused—but at least he saw an issue where no-one else, certainly not Aristotle or his followers, apparently did.[15]

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11 On Galen's "Middle Platonism," see De Lacy 1972; but more recently, Chiaradonna 2009 rightly emphasizes the extent to which Galen's interests and practice differ from those of "standard" Middle Platonists, as represented by Alcinous. Galen himself says he belongs to no sect, but "takes the best from each" (*Lib. Prop*. XIX 13 K).

12 Note also in this regard his disdain for the third Stoic indemonstrable as being useless for demonstration: *Introduction to Logic* [*Inst. Log.*] XIV 4–8; see Morison, 2008a: 100–3.

13 Edited and translated with commentary in De Lacy 1978–80.

14 Edited in Kalbfleisch 1896.

15 For a magisterial treatment of Galen's logical contributions, see Morison 2008a. On relational logic in Galen, see Barnes 1993 and 2003.

But Galen was a medical man; and his interests are fundamentally practical. Logic should be useful; and to be useful, it needs to contribute to the construction of demonstrations, as well as to the detection of plausible fallacy (the role of a logical education in resisting sophistry is a Galenic commonplace). His 15-book treatise *On Demonstration* has not survived, although he refers to it in many places. It covered a variety of topics, many of them epistemological and physical in nature; Galen evidently saw them as part of a unified whole. Demonstration of obscure truths must start from what is evident (to the senses or reason, Galen's two fundamental "criteria"), a viewpoint which accounts in part for his fundamental rejection of skepticism as self-stultifying.[16]

In several places, Galen gives examples of what he takes to be demonstrative inferences; and at *Medical Method* [*MM*] X 39–52 K, he gives a general account of what he means. Scientific demonstrations start from what is evident (to the senses, primarily), but then proceed by way of a determination of the essential natures of things so revealed to their necessary consequences. This is an artful mixture of Stoic as well as Aristotelian material; but the notion that sense-experience provides formally-structured representations of nature which may be subjected to suitable rational abstractive organization is fundamentally Aristotelian (*Posterior Analytics* 2.19; cf. 1.31). Ordinary language general terms (such as "health" and "disease") provide the starting-points, since they tend to refer to genuine kinds, even if often vaguely and confusedly. By thinking seriously about what their application-conditions entail, we can, with effort and integrity, arrive at the essences of the kinds referred to, and on the basis of these, along with other information, infer theorematic conclusions about their necessary consequences, and ultimately (at least in the case of health and disease) therapeutic conclusions (*MM* X 40–2 K).[17] All of this relies on "an indemonstrable axiom, which is agreed by all, because it is evident to the intellect [. . .]: nothing occurs without a cause" (49–50). Thus "disease" is (in a sense) agreed by all to involve damage (of a significant and lasting kind) to the natural powers (those in virtue of which we can do what we are designed to do); hence therapy requires restoring as far as possible those powers to a functional condition. Of course, what the damage really depends upon, namely the internal disposition, *diathesis*, which Galen thinks should properly be labelled the disease (*MM* X 50–1, 79–81 K), is not generally so obvious; and here Galen turns to a physical account. The general form of all of this is recognizably Aristotelian (cf. *Posterior Analytics* 1.1–6; *Physics* 1.1), even if the application

16 For his attitude to skepticism, see Hankinson 1997.

17 For detailed commentary on these passages, see Hankinson 1991, *ad loc.*; see also Hankinson 1992b, and Barnes 1991.

to medicine (indeed to practical activity generally) is distinctively Galen's. He never wavers from the view that, at least in many cases, diagnosis and therapy can be founded upon ironclad scientific demonstrations, which draw necessary conclusions from rational axioms and necessary inferences from perceptual data.

Demonstrations are distinguished, then, by the evident validity of their argumentative form, and by the evident truth of their premises; as such they are to be distinguished from the merely plausible and dialectical (although such premises, and their associated arguments, can play important roles), and especially from the merely rhetorical and the downright sophistical. Galen emphasizes these distinctions, and their Peripatetic heritage, at *PHP* V 212–27 K (= 102.18–116.18 De Lacy); this is why it is easier and less time-consuming to argue with Aristotelians than it is with Stoics (V 225 K = 114.22–27 De Lacy).

3 Physics and Metaphysics

In the preamble to his lengthy treatment of diseases of imbalance (*dyscrasiae*), which occupies the final eight books of *MM*, Galen writes that the doctrine that "all bodies [...] are composed of hot, cold, wet, and dry" is "common to virtually all the most reputable doctors as well as to the best philosophers"; of whom Aristotle is explicitly one (*MM* X 462–3 K). It is a doctrine which he characteristically fathers on Hippocrates, but like much else in his general physics its details are owed to Aristotle. It is worth here quoting from the preamble to his commentary *On Hippocrates' Nature of Man* [*HNH*]:

> Elements [...] must be distinguished from principles (ἀρχαί): there are additionally four qualities, pure cold, dryness, heat and moisture. These are not *elements* either of man or anything else, but rather *principles*: but this was confused by the earlier thinkers, who failed to distinguish the concepts of principle and element. ... But the two things are evidently distinct from one another, the latter being the least part of the whole, the former that into which this least part is conceptually changeable. For fire cannot itself be divided into two bodies and show itself to be a mixture of them, and nor can earth, water or air. But one may distinguish conceptually between the substance of the thing which changes, and the change itself. For the changing body is not the same as change which takes place in it. The changing body is the substrate, while the change in it occurs because of the exchange of the qualities; when pure heat is generated in it, fire is created, and similarly air when it receives pure moisture; and in

> respect of the same things earth is generated when what underlies everything in respect of its own qualityless nature receives into itself dryness without heat, and water <when it receives> coldness (*HNH* XV 30–1 K = 17.28–18.15 Mewaldt; cf. *Hipp. Elem.* I 480 K = 126.7–12 De Lacy).

Elements are the basic *stuffs*; but they in turn are generated by predominances of the four qualities in the underlying material. This distinction is to be found at *Generation and Corruption* 2.1, 329a27–33. The association of water with coldness and air with moisture runs counter to the orthodox Stoic view (cf. Diogenes Laertius 7.136–7), as well as common sense (surely water ought to be moist?). But Galen is not saying, in Stoic fashion, that each element is associated with a single quality only. Rather, elements are composed of pairs of qualities, although in each one of them predominates. Thus water is primarily cold but also moist, air moist and also hot, fire hot and also dry, earth dry and also cold. This too is Aristotelian (*Generation and Corruption* 2.3, 330a30–331a6, especially 331a1–6; see also *Hipp. Elem.* I 468–70 K = 112.24–116.5 De Lacy; and cf. *HNH* XV 94 K = 49.26–29 Mewaldt), as is the basic language of change and persistence.

Thus the fundamentals of Galen's elemental physics are securely Aristotelian, even though for his own purposes, Galen portrays him as being a follower and exegete of Hippocrates: *Hipp. Elem.* I 447–53 (= 92.9–96.2 De Lacy). Indeed, at *PHP* V 684–5 K (= 510.1–3 De Lacy), he says that Aristotle even follows Hippocrates' line on the humors (he is probably thinking primarily of *Problems* 30.1 on black bile, however). On the other hand, in his other basic text of physiologically-oriented physics, *Mixtures*,[18] Aristotle appears as an independent authority in his own right.[19] Here, as elsewhere, Galen's presentation of his predecessors is fundamentally affected by the particular line of intellectual parentage he wishes to establish. In the case of Aristotle, Galen adopts his characteristic stance of elevating the founder of the school at the expense of his later acolytes.[20] This is evident early in *Mixtures*:

> People engage in debate about things which are evident to the senses [. . .], and appeal to the authority of Aristotle, whose doctrines they misunderstand. Aristotle is aware of the multiplicity of senses of the terms hot, cold, dry and wet [. . .] Aristotle himself also explained how

18 Galen, *Mixtures* [*De Temper.*] I 509–694 K (= Helmreich 1904); trans. in Singer 1997.

19 As noted by van der Eijk (2009: 272).

20 He will even on occasion do this with predecessors whose views he generally rejects; thus Chrysippus is preferable to the Chrysippeans, Erasistratus to the Erasistrateans, particularly those who happen to be Galen's contemporaries.

> "to be hot" does not mean the same thing in the case of the individual's own innate heat, and that of heat acquired by some external agency. Furthermore, Aristotle [. . .] gave an account of the criteria to be used in deciding whether an object is well-balanced or not (*Mixtures* I 535 K).

The matter at issue is the nature of the "hot and wet" mixture; and Galen is attacking with those who, he says, fail to see that terms like "hot" are often used merely relatively; in such a sense the same thing may be both hot and cold (relative to different things). Galen has his own particular reasons for wanting to emphasize this. Being healthy is a matter of being in a median state with regard to one's own natural constitution—some people are naturally hotter than others (and men are hotter than women, those in the prime of life hotter than the elderly); but for each individual there is an ideal balance. Equally, different species may in general be hotter than others; lions, for instance, are particularly hot; dogs are colder than lions but hotter than humans (in general). Of course, a dog can also be hot for dog, a lion cold for a lion. These differences account both for generic differences between animal temperaments (the lion's bravery is caused by its heat), and for the difference between different individuals in the same species (as we shall see, Galen is particularly taken with Aristotle's physiognomics).

So, in his basic elemental and qualitative physics, Galen relies heavily and acknowledgedly on Aristotle, although he rejects the Aristotelian assimilation of hot and cold to active, and wet and dry to passive powers (*Generation and Corruption* 2.2, 329b24–6; *Meteorology* 4.1, 378b12–26); all are active, although the wet and the dry are less powerfully so: *Natural Faculties* [*Nat. Fac.*] II 7–9 K (= 106.4–107.6 Helmreich).[21]

The same is largely true also of his treatment of potentiality and actuality, although he is primarily interested in them as causal properties. At the beginning of Book 3 of *Mixtures*, he outlines his own views on the matter, building on the account of the different senses of hot, cold, wet, and dry that he has already elaborated:

> An attribute which is not yet present in a body, but which is of such a nature as to come about it in it, is said to belong to that body potentially. In this sense, even when newborn, a human being is rational, [. . .] a horse swift. We attribute each of these qualities to the object on the grounds that it will come to be the case provided no external factor prevents it [. . .] An actuality is something which is already completed and present; a

21 *Nat. Fac.* is edited in Helmreich 1893 and appears with English translation in Brock 1916.

> potential is something uncompleted, in the future, and liable as it were to come about while not yet being present (*Mixtures* I 646–7 K).

As that passage shows, Galen adopts, without either mentioning it as such or attributing it, the Aristotelian first/second potentiality/actuality distinction; and the generality of the initial characterization is important too. For, while Galen is primarily interested in active causal powers,[22] he makes room for (and also accepts, again without using the explicit terminology) the Aristotelian distinction between active and passive potentialities (*Metaphysics* 9.1, 1046a9–18). Galen's primary interest in this text is in clarifying the relationship between the fundamental elements and qualities, and the more proximate materials for generation and nutrition; but in so doing, his approach is thoroughly Aristotelian in inspiration:

> The most proper application of the term "potentially" is to cases where Nature herself will bring about the fulfilment in the absence of any preventive factors. It is also used where the materials already present are close to the substances to be produced. . . . One might say, e.g., that blood is potentially flesh as it requires only the smallest change in order for flesh to be produced. Food being digested in the stomach, on the other hand, is not a material 'close to' flesh in this sense . . . and barley cake and bread are even further from it. . . . But these too may be described as potentially flesh, and . . . even air, fire, water and earth, and indeed the basic matter which is common to them all (*Mixtures* I 647–8 K).

Although, for reasons which will become apparent, I have capitalized "Nature" in that passage, the idea that natural potentialities, those which will be actualized in the natural order of things absent any preventive factors, is once more echt-Aristotle. Finally in this context, Galen is at pains to emphasize the distinction between innate causal powers, such as that which fire has to heat, for example, and acquired heat:

> This is among the many matters described correctly by Aristotle, who says that among bodies which are hot, cold, dry and wet, some have these qualities in their very nature, others incidentally; water is in its own nature cold, but it will happen sometimes that it is hot incidentally. This acquired heat is however quickly lost, while the innate cold remains. And so just as hot water thrown onto a flame will extinguish it, so too opium,

22 See Hankinson 2014.

> even if it is heated to a high degree . . . will cool the animal's internal heat (*Mixtures* I 666–7 K).

However, there are points at which Galen departs, and explicitly so, from his Aristotelian heritage. As Riccardo Chiaradonna has emphasized (2009: 243–260), fragments exist from his lost *On Demonstration* which explicitly take issue with Aristotle, in particular in regard to the physics of time and the alleged necessary destruction of created things. He charges that Aristotle's definition of time is circular (Themistius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 149.4–7; cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 708.27–31), since it is the measure of the before and after *in time*; moreover, the dependency of time on change rules out what should be at least logically possible, namely time elapsing with nothing happening. In *On the Heavens* 1.10–12, Aristotle claims that it is a logical truth that everything generated must at some time be destroyed, which Galen rejects on ultimately Platonic grounds (*Timaeus* 41 A–B): the Demiurge can hold something which is by nature destructible together forever if he feels like it (Philoponus, *Against Proclus on the Eternity of the World* 599.22–601.16). In his *Marasmus* (VII 671 K), Galen writes "that everything generated will also be destroyed is neither a scientific nor a necessary consequence, but extends merely to the plausible"; and as such it is not a matter of scientific demonstrability, although Galen does accept the converse Aristotelian equivalence between the (naturally) ungenerable and the indestructible. We also know, by way of a rebuttal by Alexander of Aphrodisias, that Galen, in a lost work entitled *The First Mover is itself Unmoved* (*Lib. Prop*. XIX 47 K), rejected Aristotle's argument (*Physics* 7.1, 241b44–242a49) that everything that has an internal source of motion none the less is still moved by something distinct from it. The rebuttal survives only in Arabic sources, and its interpretation is controversial.[23]

4 Physiology and Embryology

That reference to the Demiurge is also crucial; for Galen takes over from Plato the concept of the divine artisan in an extremely strong, and fundamentally anti-Aristotelian, sense. The central text here is *Function of the Parts* (*UP* III

23 First discussed in Pines 1960; edited in Rescher and Marmura 1971; the controversy primarily concerns whether Galen took issue only with the validity of the argument, or with its conclusion as well. I incline (as did Pines) to the latter view; however, see Kupreeva 2004.

1–IV 366),[24] which Galen himself conceived of as a supplement to, and correction of, Aristotle's *Parts of Animals*; writing of his second Roman period, Galen says that

> *Function of the Parts* was by now quite widely read, on account of the enthusiasm of most doctors with a traditional medical training, as well that of philosophers of the Aristotelian school; for Aristotle himself had written a treatise of a similar kind (*Lib. Prop*. XIX 20–1 K).

That rather bland assessment disguises the extent to which Galen not only goes beyond Aristotle, but fundamentally disagrees with him as to the nature and extent of teleological explanation. Galen will on occasion adopt an Aristotelian division of αἰτίαι (albeit not exclusively—his causal vocabulary, as well as his theorizing, is strikingly eclectic),[25] albeit one influenced by Middle Platonism; he includes an instrumental cause. More surprisingly perhaps, he is at best cool toward the formal cause (although he is perfectly happy with the associated language of form and nature).[26] Indeed he mentions it by name, and then only in passing, in only one passage:

> There are several types of cause, the first and most important that for the sake of which something is generated [i.e. the final cause], second that by which it is generated [efficient cause], third that from which [material cause], the fourth that with which [instrumental cause], and the fifth, if you wish, that in accordance with which [formal cause]. And we will expect all genuine natural scientists to mention each of them in their accounts of the parts of animals' bodies (*UP* I 339.12–18).

In this passage, Galen exalts nature's providentiality, adopting the quasi-Aristotelian scheme precisely in order to exalt final cause explanation against the inadequacies of materialists such as Asclepiades, who mistakenly thinks that arteries are thin because they work hard, rather than seeing that they are thin in order to work hard. At the outset, Galen commended Aristotle's anti-Anaxagorean view that humans have hands because they are the most intelligent creatures (*Parts of Animals* 4.10, 687a22–23); but he takes it a good

24 *UP* is edited in Helmreich 1907–9 and translated in May 1968. Since the latter cross-refers only to Helmreich, I shall employ the Helmreich pagination in referencing this text.

25 See Hankinson 1994; 1998: 7–28.

26 On this coolness, see Hankinson 1998. He mentions it only twice by name, and then rather dismissively, in the 'hymn to nature' of *UP* I 337–44.

deal further, pointing out, again on the basis of detailed anatomical investigation, just how perfectly designed the hand is. Toward the end of the discussion, he notes that thumbs lack an interior tendon (unlike the other four fingers), because motion in that direction would be superfluous (*UP* I 56–7).[27]

Causes properly so-called are distinguished from mere prerequisites, such as available space and "surrounding air," at *Antecedent Causes* [*CP*] VII 78–80 (cf. 83–90), which he labels, in un-Aristotelian fashion, "incidental." Earlier, Galen has said "everyone calls those things which of their own nature contribute to something's coming to be 'causes' " (VII 76); and those genuine causes are limited to final, efficient, material and instrumental (VII 71). He follows Aristotle in holding that chance events are those which lack a final cause (VII 70; cf. *Physics* 2.4–6), and in holding little earlier that the final cause and the agent are the "primary and most important types of cause" (VI 67; cf. *Parts of Animals* 1.1, 639b15 ff.); but he is also following Plato in privileging teleological explanation (*Phaedo* 98 E–99 A; *Timaeus* 44 D–46 D), and in general form his natural teleology owes more to Plato than Aristotle: the figure of the Demiurge is never far from Galen's mind when he is thinking of animal design and construction, and this is for him no mere metaphor. His teleology is not only genuine, in the sense of its being not merely heuristic; it is also directed. Galen is, both in general and specific terms, an adherent, as Aristotle emphatically was not, of the design argument (*PHP* V 780–1, 789–90 K; *My Own Opinions* [*Prop. Plac.*] 2.1, 56.16–58.21 Nutton),[28] and this applies in spades to the microstructure of the biosphere. The more serious anatomy you know, the more obvious it is, he thinks, that the natural world is the product of intelligent design and construction.

All of this is, of course, un-Aristotelian, and Galen was well aware of that, even though he reserves his bitterest reproaches for those (in particular the atomists) who want to write purpose out of nature altogether (see e.g. *Nat. Fac.* II 26–30 K). He advertises *UP* as a supplement to *Parts of Animals*, and in several important cases where he diverges from Aristotle's view he elides that fact. At *Parts of Animals* 4.2, 677a12–13, Aristotle says that "it is likely that the gall-bladder is a residue, and not for the sake of anything," a necessary by-product of a purposively-organized structure or function, but in itself useless. Galen will occasionally avail himself of the residue story, but is in general far more concerned to discern functional adaptiveness where Aristotle sees merely the

27 See further Hankinson 1989: 225–6.

28 *Prop. Plac.* is edited with translation and commentary in Nutton 1999. A complete manuscript of this text (*Vlatadon* 14) was discovered in 2005, and a text of this is published in Boudon-Millot and Pietrobelli 2005.

existence of waste matter. This tendency is well exemplified by his treatment of human facial hair, where he sees a great deal more design than Aristotle does (compare *Parts of Animals* 2.14–15 with *UP* II 153–65). Male facial hair not merely serves to protect the face from cold, but also lends its owner a suitable air of augustness, an air which would obviously be inappropriate for women (*UP* II 154–5).[29] As for the gall-bladder, Galen expands enthusiastically on both its function and the excellence of its design at *UP* I 272–6. In general, committed as he is to a conscious, directed teleology, Galen cannot accept that there exist species-wide, evidently arranged structures which fulfil no purpose at all, although he does allow that sometimes the Demiurge has had to content himself with making something undertake some subsidiary function. But he does not mention Aristotle's failure to discover the function of the gall-bladder; and with one or two exceptions,[30] he does not, in general, give Aristotle too rough a ride in *UP*, in line with his own account of the nature of the work. Aristotle was good on function in general, but "neither Aristotle nor any of the ancients mention all the actions of the instruments (*organa*)" (*UP* I 14), even though "Aristotle has written so fully and so well on this subject" (*UP* I 15).

He is much harsher in *On Semen*, his general study of the mechanics of reproduction. Aristotle's view, whatever precisely it was, was an outlier to the extent to which it denies the female a formal role in the process, a fact which gave him notorious problems in the explanation of heritable features (*Generation of Animals* 4.3). Galen's own view is much closer to the ancient mainstream; and he asserts unequivocally that the female supplies seed, i.e. form, in addition to the matter of the foetus (*On Semen* IV 535–9 K = 86,9–90,6 De Lacy).[31] But he also attacks Aristotle's view that male semen is purely formal in its operations; on the contrary, it supplies the matter for veins, arteries and nerves (527–34), and does not simply evaporate. This is confirmed by observation, and indeed the male's experience of the suction exerted by the female orgasm; indeed conception only takes place if the semen is retained (513–19). Furthermore, he rejects Aristotle's view that the testicles play no role in sperm-production (555–63), and function simply as weights (564–8, 572–3, 576–80, 582–3). In fact, Aristotle is shamefully ignorant about the catastrophically feminizing effects of castration (573–81), and it would have been better if he had just kept quiet about the whole issue (582).

Although it is noticeable that he is particularly severe with Aristotelians, whom he charges with multiply misunderstanding the views of their master

29 On this passage, see Hankinson 1989: 215–17.

30 For which see van der Eijk 2009.

31 *On Semen* is edited with translation and commentary in De Lacy 1992.

(516–19; he accuses them of having read only the first book of *Generation of Animals* rather than all five),[32] he is almost equally dismissive of Aristotle himself, referring to him sarcastically as "most wonderful" (528) and "dearest" (530, 553), while censuring him for failing to adhere to his own principle that nature does nothing in vain (528–32). Moreover, he "forgets his own teaching" by making nature act differently in plants and in animals (544–6). Galen is quite happy to adopt the Aristotelian idea and language that the first stage of embryogenesis is vegetative (546–7: it derives from the material powers of the semen); but Aristotle himself fails to adhere to it.

At 551, he sums up: "all the parts that are fleshy in form are generated from blood; all that are membranous are derived from semen." These conclusions have been reached, as he promised at the outset, by applying Aristotle's own epistemological standards of close observation and reasoning from the nature of the matter, and from the nature of nature itself, to act (as Aristotle himself would agree) in the maximally economic fashion.

5 Psychology

Elsewhere, however, he is not so hard on Aristotle. As we saw in the case of *UP*, he often seems to be at pains to minimize the blame that can be attached to him, even in cases where he is, Galen thinks (often rightly), manifestly wrong. Perhaps the most serious error of all, to Galen's mind, is Aristotle's adherence to cardiocentrism, the view that all psychic functions are performed by (or at any rate in) the heart. A large part of *PHP* is devoted to refuting this error; Galen's principal *bêtes noires* are the Stoics, in particular Chrysippus, but also his misguided contemporaries (*PHP* V 505–6 K). Aristotle's mistake is partially pardonable, since he lived before the Alexandrian discovery of the sensory and motor nervous systems;[33] the others have so such excuse. Even so, Galen takes him to task for saying that the heart is endowed with a large number of nerves (*Parts of Animals* 3.4, 666b14–16), since he was not unfamiliar with dissection—perhaps he confused "nerve-like strands" with real nerves (*PHP* V 206–7 K). In fact, the heart has only a single nerve (200–3); but even if it contained many, that would not show that it was their source, at least in the relevant sense of their being the physical location from which they ramify, which turns out to be the brain and the spinal cord (*UP* I 414; cf. *History of Animals* 3.5, 515a27–34). Given that this is the case, and given that it is anatomically demonstrable that

32 Moraux 1983 establishes just how carefully Galen had read his Aristotelian biology.

33 Owed principally to Herophilus: see von Staden 1989.

volitional power is transmitted through the motor nervous system from the brain, there is no gainsaying the conclusion that the brain is where the ruling part of the soul is located. At the beginning of Book 8 (*PHP* V 648–50 K), Galen says that it is "generally acknowledged that the source of perception belongs to the ruling part of the soul"; anatomical investigation shows that volition and sensation are transmitted by the nerves, and they have their origin or center in the brain; so the brain is the seat of the ruling part of the soul. That, he thinks is a demonstrative, and demonstrated argument.

In fact, Aristotle wholly misunderstood the role of the brain, thinking its function was to cool (*UP* I 449); but as he himself rightly says, that function is fulfilled, and adequately so, by respiration (451), while the brain is too complex simply to be a fridge (452). Indeed Aristotle effectively implies that the brain serves no real purpose (453); and he perversely denies that all sense organs are connected to it (*Parts of Animals* 2.7, 652b3–5). Galen is a convinced Platonic tripartitonist, in terms of both function and structure; the soul has three basic types of power, rational, spirited, and desiderative, and these are, as *Timaeus* holds (but doesn't actually demonstrate, as Galen seeks to do) differentially located in the brain, the heart, and the abdomen (specifically the liver, according to Galen). At *PHP* V 514–19 K, he emphasizes that Plato talks of both 'forms' and 'parts' of the soul, where parts are to be taken as physical parts. At 516, he pithily characterizes Aristotle's error:

> So, since Plato holds that these forms are both separated by their location in the body and that they differ very greatly in essence, he has good reason to call them both forms and parts. But Aristotle and Posidonius do not speak of forms or parts of the soul, but say that there are powers of a single substance which stems from the heart (*PHP* V 516 K).

Galen will mention other specific areas where Aristotle's views are in his opinion deficient. A case in point is his theory of vision, which Galen thinks cannot account for the phenomena of reflection (*On the Soul* 3.12, 435a5–10; *Meteorology* 3.2, 372a32–b6), even though Aristotle has to make use of the notion in his account of rainbows, haloes, and so on (*Meteorology* 3.2, 372a17–18): *PHP* V 637–44 K. Indeed, Galen thinks that Aristotle was aware of the inadequacy, and deliberately skirts the issue, which can only be properly dealt with in fully geometrical terms, involving the notion of the visual ray (639–41).

I want to close by considering what is in many ways Galen's most interesting, and most puzzling, treatment of psychology in his late treatise *The Powers of the Soul are Dependent on the Mixtures of the Body* [*QAM*]. Galen consistently refuses to take any position on the substance of the soul: that we have one

is obvious; what it really is is undiscoverable, a position he advances in *PHP* (V 791–3 K), but also in the very late *Prop. Plac.* (3.1–2, 58.22–60.11 Nutton). He is, however, willing to say what it isn't, namely the psychic *pneuma*, the preferred Stoic candidate,[34] on the grounds that an animal deprived of it is rendered temporarily incapable of movement, but not actually killed (*The Function of Breathing* IV 501–2 K). In *QAM*, however, he comes closest to adopting a position on the issue, and one which is strikingly Aristotelian in tenor. As its title (in fact, as often in antiquity, its opening claim) suggests, *QAM* is dedicated to establishing the view that at the very least, psychological events and states track physiological ones (and that this tracking is causal in nature is at the very least very strongly implied: getting drunk directly affects your cognitive abilities, and it does so by altering your physiological mixture: IV 777–9 K). Galen re-affirms his commitment to Platonic tripartition (which as usual he assimilates, at least in its functional aspect, to the Aristotelian distinction between the nutritive, sensitive and rational soul). Of the three parts, Galen says that both he and Plato agree that the spirited and desiderative, which "reside in the heart and liver [. . .] cease to exist at death" (773). Each of these organs "has its own individual substance (οὐσία)," and while a strict definition is not yet called for,

> First recall the nature of the common substance of all bodies [. . .] [which] is comprised of two principles (ἀρχαί), matter and form. Matter is conceptually lacking in quality, but contains within it a mixture of four qualities, heat, cold, dryness and wetness; and these qualities give rise to bronze, iron gold, and also to flesh, sinew, fat, gristle and all such entities—those which Plato calls 'first-born' and Aristotle 'uniform' (*QAM* IV 773 K).

Galen then notes that Aristotle "defines the soul as the form of the body," where "form" is not mere physical morphology, but rather "the other principle which constructs the very body of physical bodies, which is of the uniform and simple kind and devoid of any organic composition" (773–4). So if bodies are composed of matter and form, and physical bodies are generated by the presence of the four qualities in matter, "then we must take Aristotle's form as meaning the mixture of those qualities; thus the substance of the soul too must be some mixture of these four qualities" (774). And so if the rational faculty has such a physical basis, "it too will be a mixture, namely one within the brain" (774–5). In the succeeding paragraphs (777–82), he contrasts this "Aristotelian"

34 And one to which he also thinks Aristotle "is carried in spite of himself" (*PHP* V 643 K).

view[35] with the Platonic insistence on the incorporeality and immortality of the rational soul, a view which Galen holds to be possible, but beset with all kinds of difficulties, not least in accounting for its evident susceptibility to physiologically-induced alteration, even death, a susceptibility that Plato himself acknowledges in the *Timaeus* (from which Galen proceeds to quote extensively, if selectively and somewhat tendentiously: 780–1, 789–91). At the very least, "even if you wish to posit a separate substance for the soul, one must still admit that it is a slave to the mixtures of the body" (779).

At 782–3, Galen refers to "Andronicus the Peripatetic," who "dared to state [. . .] that the substance of the soul was a mixture or power of the body; I have great respect for this man and I follow his line." This is the closest Galen ever gets to committing himself on the substance of the rational soul, and he does so in avowedly Peripatetic terms, although he castigates Andronicus for saying that soul is "either a mixture or a power dependent on that mixture," on the grounds that the soul, as substance, must have powers, and not be identified with them. Indeed

> This was correctly stated by Aristotle, who clearly distinguished and ambiguity here. For, as he pointed out, substance is used to mean both matter and form, and the composite of both, and soul is substance in the sense of form; so it is illegitimate to define it as anything other than the mixture, as was shown earlier (*QAM* IV 783 K).

At the very least, that passage demonstrates the closeness of Galen's acquaintanceship with Aristotle (whether his interpretation of him is correct is another matter). Later in the same treatise (791–8), Galen quotes extensively from *Parts of Animals* and *History of Animals* in support of his claim that Aristotle too believes that the soul's powers depend on the nature of the body, in particular on that of the mother's blood (*Parts of Animals* 2.2, 648a2–10); its different consistencies contribute to the difference in the offsprings' characters; and in general the differences between different animals' characters is to be accounted for in terms of their differing physical constitutions (*Parts of Animals* 2.4, 650b19–651a4). These passages are reinforced by ones taken from *History of Animals* 1 (1.8, 491b12–13; 1.9, 491b24–26; 1.10, 492a3–4 and 492a10; 492a11–13; 1.11 492a32–b3) in support of general physiognomical correlations (for example, that those with large protruding ears tend to stupidity and talkativeness).

35 Whether of course this really is Aristotle's view depends in part on how to interpret the notorious νοῦς θύραθεν of *Generation of Animals* 2.3, 736b27–29.

All of this is indicative of Aristotle's view "that the construction of the whole body is, in each kind of animal, especially fitted to the characteristics and faculties of that animal's soul" (*QAM* V 795 K), a view shared enthusiastically, and with a characteristically directedly teleological slant, by Galen: monkeys have ridiculous bodies to go with their absurd souls (*UP* I 54); but even so, their bodies are well adapted to what they are supposed to do, such as scampering up trees (*UP* I 153–4). Aristotle, that connoisseur of species function and adaptiveness, might well have agreed.

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CHAPTER 13

Plotinus' Reception of Aristotle

Sara Magrin

1 Introduction

So much has been said about Plotinus' reception of Aristotle, and the nature of this reception has been interpreted in so many ways, that one cannot approach this subject without first providing a brief history of its development. This procedure, I hope, will allow us to identify the main philosophical domains in which Plotinus engages with Aristotle's thought, while at the same time enabling us to better interpret that engagement. I will therefore start by sketching the views on Plotinus' reception of Aristotle that have shaped the recent history of this subject. Then I will introduce the contemporary debate and argue that, despite its specific traits, like previous discussions, it aims at a general assessment of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle by focusing on the analysis of Aristotle's philosophical doctrines and Plotinus' approach to them. I will suggest that, given the variety and complexity of Plotinus' use of Aristotle's doctrines, no such assessment can be reached. In contrast to this doctrinal approach, I will argue that the key to arriving at a general assessment of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle is the analysis of his method of philosophical inquiry.

2 Plotinus' Reception of Aristotle: A Brief History

Plotinus' interest in Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition is well documented. In his *Life of Plotinus* (14.4–7), Porphyry remarks that in Plotinus' writings Stoic and Peripatetic doctrines (δόγματα) are mingled in (ἐμμέμικται) in a concealed way (λανθάνοντα), and he says that Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, in particular, is compressed (καταπεπύκνωται) in them. Porphyry also informs us that, in the meetings of Plotinus' school, students were asked to read commentaries, some of which were by Peripatetic philosophers (14.10–14). He mentions Aspasius, Alexander, and Adrastus, but says that this list is not exhaustive and that Plotinus had his students read any commentary on Aristotle that was available.

Thus not only are we told that Plotinus read and somehow incorporated Aristotle's works into the *Enneads*, but we are also informed that he read

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commentaries on those works, and we have the names of at least some of the Peripatetic commentators he was familiar with. This is a wealth of information, but the interpretation of it raises at least two problems. The first problem is this: the more we learn about Peripatetic philosophy in the early Empire, the more it seems that the interpretation of core Aristotelian doctrines varied significantly among the Peripatetic commentators of that period, to the point that we can speak of many forms of Aristotelianism from at least the time of Boethus of Sidon (first century BC) until that of Alexander of Aphrodisias (late second and early third century AD).[1] Thus, while the fact that Plotinus used several commentaries to interpret Aristotle's works establishes his interest in Aristotle, it raises the question of which Aristotle he was interested in. The second problem has to do with the use Plotinus makes of Peripatetic doctrines. By saying that Peripatetic doctrines are mingled in Plotinus' writings, Porphyry might mean that Plotinus appropriated some Peripatetic doctrines and somehow fitted them into his own Platonism. But he might also simply mean that Plotinus often mentioned those doctrines, perhaps even to refute them, without explicitly reporting his source.[2]

In the last fifty years, the debate on Plotinus' reception of Aristotle has been defined by these two problems: that of identifying which Aristotle Plotinus is interested in, and that of understanding how Plotinus uses Peripatetic doctrines. As Porphyry's remarks in the *Life of Plotinus* show, the discussion of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle can be traced back to the first generation of his students. It is only in the 60s, however, that it began to take the shape that characterizes it today, with the publication of *Les Sources de Plotin*, a volume of ten essays aimed at recovering the sources of Plotinus' thought.[3] Two essays, in particular, became the starting points for any subsequent analysis of the subject. By means of close textual comparison, Paul Henry and A. H. Armstrong independently argued that Plotinus developed some of his best known theses in psychology and metaphysics on the grounds of observations made by Alexander in *On the Soul* and *Mantissa*.[4] Armstrong's study became especially influential for two main reasons: its analysis of Plotinus' engagement with Alexander, and the centrality in Plotinus' thought of the thesis it examined, namely the thesis of the identity of Intellect (*Nous*) and its thoughts.

As is well known, Plotinus posits three first principles (ἀρχαί) of reality: the One, the Intellect, and the Soul. The origin of this triad can be traced back to

1 On this issue, I refer the reader to chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 of this volume. Cf. Rashed 2007: 1–6.

2 For a review of possible interpretations of Porphyry's claim, see Kalligas 2014: 57–58.

3 Dodds et al. 1960.

4 Henry 1960; Armstrong 1960.

the accounts of the first principles developed by the Platonists of the early Empire mostly on the grounds of Plato's *Timaeus*. However, Plotinus has a distinctive conception of these principles, and especially of the first two: the One and the Intellect. Most Platonists of the first two centuries AD interpreted the Demiurge of Plato's *Timaeus* as a divine intellect.[5] Some of them, like Alcinous, argued that this intellect was the highest principle of reality.[6] Others, like Numenius, posited another principle above it, but kept conceiving of this higher principle as an intellect.[7] In contrast to his predecessors, Plotinus denies the Intellect the rank of highest principle (5.4; 5.6), and argues that the Intellect is the same as the Platonic Forms, which are its thoughts. Armstrong traced back Plotinus' conception of the Intellect to Alexander of Aphrodisias. In his treatise *On the Soul* (89.22–23), Alexander identifies the eternal and impassible intellect discussed by Aristotle in *On the Soul* 3.5 with the active Intellect introduced by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*) as first principle. Moreover, in both his treatise *On the Soul* (87.43–88.5) and in the *Mantissa* (108.7–9, 16–19; 109.23–110), Alexander establishes the identity of this Intellect with its intelligible object. On the basis of textual comparison, Armstrong concluded that Plotinus developed the thesis of the identity of the Intellect with the Forms by transposing Alexander's thesis of the identity of the Intellect with its object into Platonic terms.[8]

Armstrong's exegetical work showed that Plotinus' reception of Aristotle was filtered, at least sometimes, through the early Peripatetic commentators, and especially through Alexander of Aphrodisias. His approach, however, framed the analysis of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle as part of an inquiry into Plotinus' sources. Throughout the 60s and 70s, the view that Plotinus merely transposed Aristotelian doctrines into a new context, by adapting them to his Platonism, became fairly standard.[9] It influenced—and, in turn, was strengthened by—Merlan's interpretation of Alexander as a precursor of Neoplatonism, and it inspired Henry Blumenthal's account of Plotinus' psychology.[10]

Like Plato, Plotinus thinks that the soul is a substance that can exist in separation from the body, and a large part of his psychology aims to explain how this substance can be present in the body and interact with it. To solve this problem, he argues that the soul itself is always separate from the body, but

5 For a recent reconstruction of the history of this interpretation, see Opsomer 2005.

6 Alcinous, *The Handbook of Platonism* [*Didaskalikos*] 10.

7 Numenius, fr. 16 Des Places; cf. fr. 12, 13, 15 Des Places.

8 Armstrong 1960: 408 and 411.

9 Cf. Armstrong 1960: 408, where this process of adaptation is labeled "critical rethinking."

10 Merlan 1963: 17 and 38; Blumenthal 1971 and 1972.

produces in it an image or shadow of itself by actualizing some of its powers (1.1.4–7; 4.4.18). Through this image the soul enables living beings to perform those activities that require a body, such as nutrition, reproduction, perception, and so forth. Blumenthal interpreted Plotinus' account of the image of the soul as an adaptation of Aristotle's psychology to a Platonic frame. Having rejected Aristotle's hylomorphic conception of the soul as incompatible with his soul-body dualism (4.7.8.5; cf. Aristotle, *On the Soul* 2.1, 412a27–b1), Plotinus, in his view, used the details of Aristotle's psychology to explain the operations of the soul in the body.[11] These "details," as Blumenthal calls them, amount, however, to a full-fledged theory of the embodied soul and include Aristotle's accounts of the faculties of the soul, perception, representation, memory, and emotions.

It is a matter of general consensus today that Plotinus' conception of the Intellect and his analysis of the embodied soul owe a great deal to Aristotle and Alexander. In this respect, the studies of Henry, Armstrong, and especially Blumenthal, are still very influential. Yet their source-based approach rests on the presupposition that Plotinus simply appropriated and adapted parts of Aristotle's doctrines after rejecting, without serious philosophical arguments, what he found un-Platonic in them. By their lights, Plotinus did not read Aristotle and his Peripatetic commentators in order to examine philosophical problems and think them through on the basis of their texts. In other words, Plotinus never considered Aristotle and Alexander his philosophical interlocutors.[12]

The limits of the source-based approach became clear in the 80s, when Sharples' studies showed that Alexander could not be viewed as a precursor of Neoplatonism. Scholars continued to appreciate the role of Alexander's conception of the Intellect in the development of Plotinus' metaphysics, but they began to abandon the idea that Plotinus could have merely transposed Aristotle's and Alexander's doctrines into a Platonic context. In the same period, a series of studies on Plotinus' psychology and metaphysics examined his engagement with Aristotle on more philosophical grounds.[13] In the domain of metaphysics, scholars explored new subjects, such as Plotinus' accounts

11 Blumenthal 1972: 345–358.

12 For a different source-based approach to the analysis of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle, see Szlezák 1979: 9–13, 54, 113–119. Szlezák argued that Plotinus did not transpose Aristotle's doctrines into his own terms, but adopted some of Aristotle's concepts and formulations in order to explain difficult Platonic passages.

13 As for psychology, see especially O'Meara 1985, and Emilsson 1988. As for metaphysics, see Lloyd 1987.

of actuality, potentiality (2.5), and matter (2.4; 2.5; 3.6; 1.8).[14] The analysis of Plotinus' account of matter, in particular, revealed that his engagement with Alexander was not limited to his treatise *On the Soul* and the *Mantissa*, but extended to his *Questions* as had already begun to emerge from Steven Strange's study of *Enn*. 6.1–3, to which I now turn.[15]

3 The Contemporary Debate

In the late 80s, Steven Strange's research on *Enn*. 6.1–3 (*On the Genera of Being*) brought about another major development in the analysis of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle.[16] As its title suggests, this is a treatise on ontology, which examines how many and what kinds of beings there are. Plotinus begins the treatise with a series of objections against Aristotle's categories (6.1.1–24), which he interprets as a classification of beings. The standard interpretation of *Enn*. 6.1–3 before Strange went back to Karl Praechter. For Praechter, the treatise was an anti-Aristotelian polemic, in which Plotinus aligned himself with those Platonists of the early Empire, such as Lucius, Nicostratus, and Atticus, who were hostile to Aristotle.[17] Against this interpretation, Strange argued that Plotinus' reading of the *Categories* aimed to save what could be saved of the Aristotelian notion of sensible substance in the context of his Platonic metaphysics, thus preparing the way for Porphyry's Platonizing interpretation of this treatise.

Given the influence of Strange's interpretation on contemporary discussions of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle, we should pause to consider it in some detail. On this interpretation, Plotinus' argument in *On the Genera of Being* unfolds in three steps, each of which corresponds to one of the three parts into which Porphyry divided the treatise in his edition of the *Enneads*. In *Enn*. 6.1, Plotinus, for Strange, criticizes Aristotle's categories by using a battery of stock Platonist objections. On the grounds of these objections, he concludes that the categories are not an exhaustive classification of the things there are (6.1.15–30), for they classify only sensible beings to the exclusion of intelligible beings

14 On actuality and potentiality see Narbonne 1994; on matter see Corrigan 1996.

15 Especially relevant for Plotinus' account of matter are *Questions* 2.7 and 1.24.

16 *Enn*. 6.1–3 was originally a single treatise; Porphyry divided it into three treatises in his edition of Plotinus' works (*Life of Plotinus* 5.50–55 and 26.1–13).

17 Praechter 1922. For the relation between Plotinus' approach to the *Categories* and that of some of his Platonist predecessors, such as Lucius and Nicostratus, see Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 1.1–2.9.

(6.1.1.28–29).[18] Plotinus argues that, as Aristotle himself concedes, intelligible beings are ontologically prior to sensible ones, but things that are ranked as prior and posterior, on Aristotle's own grounds, cannot have a common genus, and thus cannot fall into one and the same category.[19] Having invoked the ontological priority of intelligible beings to limit the scope of the categories to sensible things only, Plotinus uses it also to answer one of Aristotle's arguments against the Forms: the Third Man Argument (*Metaphysics* 1.9, 990b15–17).[20] Roughly speaking, the argument rests on two assumptions. The first is that a term, e.g. "man," is predicated univocally of a number of particular things, e.g. all particular men, insofar as all those things participate in a single Form, e.g. the Form Man. The second is that a term that is predicated univocally of a number of particular things is also predicated univocally of both the Form and the particulars which participate in it. Starting from these assumptions, the argument aims to show that the hypothesis that there are Forms leads to an infinite regress. If, for instance, the univocal predication of the term "man" of particular men is explained by invoking the Form Man, then the univocal predication of that term of both the particular man and the Form must also be explained by invoking another, third, man over and above the particular man and the Form Man. Against the Third Man Argument, Plotinus points out that, on Aristotle's own grounds, no term can be univocally predicated of items ranked as prior and posterior.[21] Since the particular man and the Form Man are such items in his view, he concludes that "man" can never be univocally predicated of both of them, and that, therefore, there is nothing to explain by the invocation of a Third Man. "Man," Plotinus maintains, is predicated of both the particular man and the Form, but it is predicated of them equivocally.

In *Enn*. 6.2, Plotinus, according to Strange, examines intelligible beings, and argues that the genera of intelligible beings are the five great kinds of Plato's *Sophist* (Being, Same, Other, Motion, and Rest), and that sensible substance is not being but merely coming to be (γένεσις, Plato's *Timaeus* 27 D 6–28 A 1). Finally, on Strange's interpretation, in *Enn*. 6.3 Plotinus comes back to Aristotle's *Categories* to examine specifically Aristotle's notion of sensible substance.[22] Arguably, there is a conflict between Aristotle's conception of substance in the *Categories* and in the central books of the *Metaphysics*.

18 Strange 1987: 969–970.

19 The priority invoked by Plotinus here is the so-called priority "in nature" or "in being" (cf. Aristotle, *On the Soul* 2.3, 414b20–415a13).

20 Strange 1987: 972.

21 On this point, see Lloyd 1962: 67–72.

22 Strange 1987: 970.

While in the *Categories* Aristotle identifies primary substances with sensible particulars, such as this and that particular man, and secondary substances with forms (εἴδη), in the central books of the *Metaphysics* he seems to suggest that primary substances are forms, while sensible particulars are merely compounds of matter and forms.[23] For Strange, in *Enn.* 6.3 (4.16–17; 5.7–13), Plotinus first reconciles the conception of substance of the *Categories* with that of the *Metaphysics* by using Alexander's interpretation of the relation between forms and sensible particulars (cf. *Question* 1.17).[24] Then he argues that Aristotle's immanent forms are merely the sum of the substantial qualities of a sensible thing (6.3.5.25–29; 8.19–23), and should be conceived of as images of Platonic Forms in sensible things (6.3.8.30–37). Finally, on these grounds, he concludes that sensible substances are only aggregates of matter and substantial qualities and are ontologically dependent on Forms.

Having found an answer to the Third Man argument, and having re-conceptualized the Aristotelian notions of immanent form and sensible substance, so as to make them compatible with his Platonic metaphysics, Plotinus, for Strange, arrives at a "purified" Aristotelian metaphysics.[25] In Strange's view, it is on this purified Aristotelian metaphysics that Porphyry builds when he incorporates the *Categories* into the Platonist school curriculum.[26]

Strange's interpretation of *Enn.* 6.1–3 has since inspired scholars to consider afresh the issue of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition. In today's debate Plotinus' interest in Aristotle and Alexander is taken for granted. What scholars discuss is the use he makes of their doctrines, and what is disputed is whether Plotinus developed his Platonism by systematically refuting Peripatetic doctrines or rather by incorporating them into his own Platonism, thus anticipating later Neoplatonist attempts at harmonizing Plato and Aristotle. Unsurprisingly, the discussion has been focused in large part on the interpretation of *Enn.* 6.1–3 and on Plotinus' conception of sensible substances and immanent forms.[27]

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23 As Strange notes (970), the conflict is less evident if one translates εἶδος in the *Categories* as "species," but the Greek word is the same as that used for "form" in the *Metaphysics*.

24 For Alexander's argument, see Strange 1987: 971 (to be compared with Ellis 1994 and Rashed 2007: 161).

25 Strange 1987: 972.

26 I say "at least in part" because Porphyry also provides a different reading of the *Categories*, according to which the treatise does not deal with ontology but with the semantics of terms.

27 The view that Plotinus anticipates the harmonizing tendencies of later Neoplatonism is defended, starting from the analysis of *Enn.* 6.1–3, by Horn 1995: 30–148. Unlike Strange, however, Horn does not think that Plotinus "purified" Aristotle's conception of substance,

The most recent contribution to this debate is that of Riccardo Chiaradonna, and it offers a further example of how the analysis of the Peripatetic tradition can shape our understanding of Plotinus.[28] We know that the early Peripatetic commentators were engaged in a lively discussion concerning the correct interpretation of Aristotle's notion of substance. We also know that Alexander argued, against Boethus' conception of substance as matter, that substance was primarily form.[29] Chiaradonna reads *Enn*. 6.1–3 in light of Alexander's and Boethus' discussion on the nature of substance, and develops an interpretation of the treatise that is significantly different from that of Strange. He agrees with Strange that for Plotinus the *Categories* deals exclusively with sensible beings, but he argues that already in *Enn*. 6.1 Plotinus goes beyond the stock Platonist objections against Aristotle's categories, and introduces the problem of determining whether substance for Aristotle is matter or form.[30] Having introduced this problem in *Enn*. 6.1, in *Enn*. 6.3 Plotinus, for Chiaradonna, examines Boethus' and Alexander's conflicting solutions to it in order to show that Aristotle lacks a coherent account of substance.[31] Far from purifying Aristotle's metaphysics, then, Plotinus, in Chiaradonna's interpretation, rejects Aristotle's account of substance, and replaces it with his own, Platonic account. On this Platonic account, substance is form, but the form of a sensible thing is neither the sum of its essential qualities, as argued by Strange, nor in general one of its constituents. Rather, the form of a sensible thing is an intelligible principle, i.e. a *logos*.[32] This *logos* produces the sensible qualities of the thing of which it is the form, but, since it is intelligible in nature, it is never "in" that thing as one of its components. As it is not in the thing of which it is the form, it replaces, rather than purifies, Aristotle's conception of immanent form.[33]

In a series of recent studies, Chiaradonna has expanded his conclusions on Plotinus' approach to the *Categories*, and developed them into a general

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but that he tried to show the compatibility between it and Plato's own understanding of what substance is. Cf. de Haas 2001, who reads *Enn*. 6.1–3 as paving the way to Porphyry's interpretation of the treatise.

28 Chiaradonna 2002.

29 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 78.4–20; Rashed 2004, and Rashed 2007: 22–26.

30 Chiaradonna 2002: 64–67.

31 Chiaradonna 2002: 77.

32 Chiaradonna 2002: 119, 121–122.

33 For a criticism of Strange's reading of *Enn*. 6.1–3, see also Barnes 2008: 131–133. Barnes remarks, correctly in my view, that, since in *Enn*. 6.1–3 Plotinus never argues for the need to purify Aristotle's conceptions of sensible substance and immanent form, any argument that aims to show that he intended to do so is in the end an argument *e silentio*.

account of his reception of Aristotle.[34] This account assigns a fundamental role to Aristotle's doctrines in the development of Plotinus' Platonism.[35] For Chiaradonna, Plotinus' engagement with Aristotle's doctrines differs substantially from that of his Platonist predecessors in the early Empire. In his view, the Platonists of the early Empire either knew very few Aristotelian treatises or were familiar with Aristotle's thought only via doxographical reports.[36] Chiaradonna argues that Plotinus, in contrast, acquired an extensive knowledge of Aristotle on the strength of Alexander's commentaries and treatises. These works, he suggests, unified and systematized Aristotle's thought, thus preparing it for reception within the Platonist tradition.[37] Plotinus' Platonism, for Chiaradonna, is in large part a response to Aristotle's criticism of Plato. Whenever he discusses Aristotle's doctrines, Plotinus has an agenda: he either aims to answer Aristotle's objections against Plato or wants to show that Aristotle's views are incoherent and raise problems that can be solved only within the doctrinal frame of Platonism.[38]

Chiaradonna's account of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle rightly emphasizes the role of Aristotle as a philosophical interlocutor for Plotinus. In contrast to Chiaradonna, however, I think that Plotinus' engagement with Aristotle's doctrines cannot be explained by means of a general formula. Plotinus discusses aspects of Aristotle's thought in almost every one of his treatises, and often his discussion depends upon exegetical traditions that are difficult to reconstruct. We have seen that he is particularly interested in Aristotle's metaphysics and psychology, but his engagement with Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition extends to ethics and physics as well. In *Enn.* 1.4 (*On Happiness*) he examines, and seems to reject, the conception of happiness (εὐδαιμονία) that, by his time, had become standard within the Peripatetic tradition.[39] As for physics, he discusses Aristotle's conception of time (3.7), his view that the heavens are made of ether (2.1), and his analysis of motion (κίνησις) (6.1.16; 6.3.22). The list could

34 See Chiaradonna 2005; Chiaradonna 2009; Chiaradonna 2010.

35 Chiaradonna 2009: 23–24.

36 Chiaradonna 2009: 21; Chiaradonna 2010: 268–269.

37 Charadonna 2010: 268 and 270.

38 Chiaradonna 2009: 24–25.

39 This conception of happiness is largely based on *Nicomachean Ethics* 1, and is along the lines of what we call today the inclusivist reading of Aristotle's ethics. In *Enn.* 1.4 Plotinus seems to reject it in favor of the view that happiness rests exclusively on contemplation (θεωρία). See also *Enn.* 1.5 (*On Whether Happiness Increases in Time*); *Enn.* 1.2 (*On Virtues*), and the analysis of emotions in *Enn.* 3.6.4, where Plotinus seems to rely, at least in part, on Aspasius' commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* (cf. the list of references to Aspasius in Kalligas 2014: 687).

go on, but these examples suffice to show that, given the variety of philosophical domains and contexts in which Plotinus discusses Aristotelian doctrines, it would be impossible to arrive at a general assessment of his approach that encompasses all cases. To give a more concrete example of the problems one faces in the attempt to reach such a general assessment, I turn to one of the passages on which Chiaradonna relies for his conclusion that Plotinus engages with Aristotle's doctrines either to answer Aristotle's objections against Plato or to show that they raise problems that can be solved only within a Platonic doctrinal frame. As I have said, Chiaradonna draws this conclusion mostly on the grounds of his analysis of *Enn.* 6.1–3, but he invokes in support of it a passage from *Enn.* 4.3.20.[40]

In *Enn.* 4.3.19, Plotinus examines Plato's account of the generation of the soul at *Timaeus* 35 A 1–3, where Plato says that the soul is made of both indivisible and divisible being, which comes to be in bodies. Plotinus explains that what Plato means by saying that the soul is made of divisible being is that it comes to acquire parts when some of its faculties come to be actualized in the suitable parts of a body. In *Enn.* 4.3.20, he observes that this conception of the parts of the soul and their presence in the body leads to a dilemma: *either* no part of our soul is in a place, in which case our soul is neither within our body nor outside it, *or* some parts are in a place and some are not, in which case a part of our soul is within us and a part is not. To solve this dilemma Plotinus needs to examine how our soul can be said to be within our body, and this is what he does in *Enn.* 4.3.20. There he argues that the soul is not in the body as in a place, nor as a part in a subject, nor as a part in a whole, nor as a whole in its parts, nor as a form in matter. It has long been noted that this list has much in common with Alexander's list of the ways in which the soul is said to be in the body at *On the Soul* 13.9–15.29.[41] But while Alexander concludes that the soul is in a body as its form, Plotinus rejects this conclusion. Chiaradonna argues that, in *Enn.* 4.3.20, Plotinus rejects Alexander's conception of the soul as the form of a body by showing that this conception cannot account for the complexity of the relation between soul and body. However, since Plotinus does not try to refute Alexander in *Enn.* 4.3.20, but merely states that his view is untenable, Chiaradonna concludes that Plotinus' argument here rests implicitly on the criticism of Aristotle's notion of immanent form in *Enn.* 6.3.4–5. This move does not seem legitimate to me, since it seems to make Chiaradonna's argument circular. If *Enn.* 4.3.20 is supposed to show that anywhere in the *Enneads* Plotinus approaches Aristotelian doctrines in the same

40 Chiaradonna 2005: 257–259.

41 Blumenthal 1968.

way in which he approaches them in *Enn*. 6.1–3, the analysis of *Enn*. 4.3.20 cannot rely on that of *Enn*. 6.1–3. It is true that Plotinus' criticism of immanent forms is related to his rejection of the Aristotelian conception of the soul as form of a body, but this is not enough to substantiate Chiaradonna's interpretation of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle. To reach that goal, one has to show that Plotinus' analysis of the presence of the soul in the body is a response to Alexander and aims at solving, in a Platonic frame, the problems raised by the Aristotelian conception of the soul. Plotinus' analysis of the soul in *Enn*. 4.3.20, however, is neither motivated by the need to answer Alexander—for it is motivated by the attempt to answer a dilemma raised by Plotinus' own reading of the *Timaeus*—nor does it aim to show that Aristotle's conception of the soul raises problems that can be solved only within a Platonic doctrinal frame.

Rather than trying to give a systematic interpretation of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle's doctrines, it is preferable, I think, to conclude, with George Karamanolis, that Plotinus approaches Aristotelian doctrines in different ways in different contexts.[42] When he views them as incompatible with his Platonism, he is critical of them, and, generally, he rejects them; when he thinks that they do not threaten his Platonism, he uses them in various ways to solve his own philosophical problems. To this, I would add that he also uses them, at times, to buttress his polemic against Stoic corporealism.[43] In this regard, in fact, Plotinus and Alexander may be viewed as natural allies, for, even if Alexander does not believe in a plurality of separate Forms, he agrees with the Platonists that the first principle and cause of reality is an intelligible being, and that the soul is incorporeal.

4 A Question of Method

Although Plotinus' reception of Aristotle's *doctrines* escapes any systematizing attempts, this does not mean that we cannot arrive at a general assessment of his reception of Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition. What we need to do is to set aside the analysis of specific arguments and consider his *method* of philosophical inquiry. Although I disagree with Chiaradonna's account of Plotinus' reception of Aristotle, I do agree with him that Plotinus has an extensive knowledge of Aristotle's works, which is often filtered through Alexander. I do not think, however, that what distinguishes his engagement with Aristotle

42 Karamanolis 2006: 241–242.

43 See Henry 1961: 443.

from that of his Platonist predecessors is his knowledge of the Aristotelian *corpus per se*. Rather, what seems to me to be distinctive of Plotinus is the interest he has in a large variety of aspects of Aristotle's thought. As far as we know, Plotinus' predecessors in the early Empire had access to the same Aristotelian treatises he had access to, and there is no reason to think that the Peripatetic commentaries on Aristotle produced before Alexander were not available to them. Alexander's systematization may have made Aristotle's thought philosophically more accessible, but philosophical accessibility alone cannot provide a reason for the study of a philosopher's work in the lack of some specific interest. Thus, rather than being the result of Alexander's systematization, Plotinus' extensive knowledge of Aristotle, I think, is the result of his extensive interest in Aristotle. I want to suggest that this interest is explained by his method of philosophical inquiry, and that this method owes a great deal to Alexander.

We may start by considering what Porphyry says when he assesses Plotinus' work against the background of his contemporaries. Relating an observation made by Longinus, in his *Life of Plotinus*, Porphyry says that Plotinus distinguished himself from his predecessors for the multitude of problems (πλήθει . . . προβλημάτων) he examined and for the use of a distinctive manner of speculation (τρόπῳ δὲ θεωρίας ἰδίῳ) (*Life of Plotinus* 21.1–4; cf. 20.68–71). These remarks are often read as pointing to the originality of Plotinus' work, but originality does not seem to be the issue here. Whatever exactly Longinus and Porphyry might have meant, their words do not suggest that Plotinus was saying or doing something novel. Rather, they suggest that he was interested in more philosophical problems than his predecessors and contemporary generally were, and that *the manner* in which he was going about examining those problems, meaning his method of inquiry, was unusual. We can try to understand what this manner was by considering some passages in which Plotinus describes his method of philosophical inquiry.[44] In *Enn*. 3.5 (*On Love*), Plotinus introduces his analysis of love in the following way:

> About love, it is worth examining (ἐπισκέψασθαι) (a) whether it is a god or a spirit or an affection of the soul, or (b) whether one kind is a god or a spirit and another also an affection, and what sort of god or spirit or affection each of these is by going through the notions (ἐπινοίας) of the

44 Plotinus' manner of speculation is often traced back to his teacher, Ammonius Saccas. Since Porphyry does not explicitly relate this manner to Ammonius' teaching, and since we know near to nothing about Ammonius himself, the suggestion that Plotinus' method of inquiry may depend on Ammonius' seems unwarranted to me.

> rest of mankind, and those which were developed about these topics in the domain of philosophy, and especially the views that the divine Plato holds (μάλιστα ὅσα ὑπολαμβάνει ὁ θεῖος Πλάτων), who has, of course, written much about love in many places of his works (3.5.1.1–7; trans. Armstrong, slightly modified).

Plotinus wonders about what love is, and in order to find an answer, he articulates an *aporia* with two horns—marked as (a) and (b) in the quotation. In the first horn, he assumes that love is a single kind of thing, and lists the kinds of things it could be. In the second horn, he assumes that love is different kinds of things. Then he explains how he is going to solve this *aporia*. He says that he will examine the views of all mankind on the matter, and, in particular, those of the philosophers who wrote about love, with special attention to Plato.

Another significant passage for reconstructing Plotinus' method of philosophical inquiry is the first chapter of *Enn*. 3.7 (*On Eternity and Time*). I divide the text into six parts, each of which corresponds to a step in the method Plotinus describes:

> Of course, (1) when we try to concentrate on them [sc. eternity and time] and, so to speak, get close to them (οἷον ἐγγὺς προσελθεῖν), (2) we find again that our thought runs into *aporiai* (πάλιν αὖ ταῖς γνώμαις ἀποροῦντες); (3) we consider the statements of the ancients (τῶν παλαιῶν) about them, who differ one from the other, and (4) perhaps also different interpretations of the same statements, and we set our minds at rest about them and think it sufficient if we are able, when we are asked, to state the opinion of the ancients, and so we are satisfied to be freed from the need of further research about them. Now (5) we must consider that some of the blessed philosophers of ancient times (τῶν ἀρχαίων) have found out (εὑρηκέναι) the truth (τὸ ἀληθές); but it is proper to investigate which of them have attained it most completely (οἱ τυχόντες μάλιστα), and (6) how we, too, could reach an understanding about these things (3.7.1.7–16; trans. Armstrong, slightly modified).

Here Plotinus explains that he begins a philosophical inquiry in the attempt to solve a philosophical problem, e.g. to grasp what eternity and time are (step 1). He says that this kind of inquiry produces *aporiai* (step 2), the solution of which requires the analysis of the relevant opinions of the ancients (step 3). Since these opinions have been interpreted in different ways by different people, he observes that it is useful to take relevant interpretative traditions into

consideration (step 4). Then he makes clear that by "the ancients" he means ancient philosophers, and he explains why the mere understanding of the opinions of these philosophers cannot be the end of his inquiry. This is because those opinions approximate the truth in different degrees, so that he needs to compare them against each other to find out which of them touched upon the truth more than the others (step 5). To assess his predecessors' views, however, he has to examine the problem in question by himself and form his own opinion on the issue (step 6).[45]

The method of philosophical inquiry that Plotinus describes in *Enn.* 3.7.1 is the same as that outlined by Aristotle at the beginning of Book 3 of the *Metaphysics* (3.1, 994a1–995b4), where Aristotle claims that a philosophical problem should be discussed by developing *aporiai*.[46] However, it is often said that there is a substantial difference between Aristotle's and Plotinus' methods, and that this difference rests on Plotinus' emphasis on the authority of the ancients, by which he means all the philosophers up to the time of, and including, Aristotle.[47] I do not want to deny that Plotinus privileges the views of these ancient philosophers at times. In his age, after all, the works of those philosophers were considered to be classics, and were thus viewed as especially important. However, the special value that Plotinus ascribes to the ancients, does not, in my view, make his method of inquiry significantly different from that described by Aristotle in the *Metaphysics*. If it is true that in *Enn.* 3.7.1 Plotinus examines the nature of eternity and time by considering the opinions of the ancients, it is likewise true that in the methodological passage from *Enn.* 3.5 (*On Love*), which I have quoted above, he explicitly says that, to find out what love is, he will consider not only any relevant philosophical opinion, but even, more generally, the views of mankind. Thus, although he might at times privilege the views of the "ancient philosophers," his method of philosophical inquiry does not rest particularly, let alone exclusively, on the analysis of those views (cf. 2.4.1). In fact, it does not even rest on the analysis of the views of philosophers only (cf. 6.8.1.13–22). Plotinus' choice of the opinions to be examined for the solution of an *aporia* depends, as is reasonable, on the subject matter of the *aporia* itself. When the subject matter is love,

45 For a similar analysis, see Smith 1996: 196–197.

46 Strange 1987: 964–965. Cf. Kalligas 2014: 583, who points also to *Nicomachean Ethics* 7.1, 1145b2–7.

47 That these are the philosophers whom Plotinus calls "the ancients" emerges from *Enn.* 5.1.8–9. On some interpretations, Plotinus would have ascribed more authority to them than to later philosophers in light of the view, common in his time, that the ancients had a privileged access to the truth.

he considers both philosophical and non-philosophical opinions, as on love both philosophers and non-philosophers happen to have opinions. When the subject matter is eternity, he examines only the opinions of philosophers, as only philosophers tend to have views on this topic. One may object that my reading does not take into account the fact that Plotinus says, in *Enn*. 3.7.1, that the ancients actually found out the truth. If he thinks that the ancients found out the truth, one might say, he must also think that their views are especially worthy of investigation. However, in *Enn*. 3.7, Plotinus says in fact that only *some* of the ancients have found out the truth, and that each of them touched upon it to a different extent. The key to understanding his point, I think, is provided by another passage from Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. At the beginning of *Metaphysics* 2, Aristotle observes the following:

> The investigation of the truth is in one way hard, in another easy. An indication of this is found in the fact that no one can attain it [sc. the truth] adequately, while, on the other hand, no one fails it entirely (σημεῖον δὲ τὸ μήτ' ἀξίως μηδένα δύνασθαι τυχεῖν αὐτῆς μήτε πάντας ἀποτυγχάνειν) [. . .]. It is just that we should be grateful, not only to those whose opinions we may share, but also to those who have expressed more superficial views; for these also contributed something, by developing before us the powers of thought (2.1, 993a30–b14; trans. Ross slightly modified).

Here Aristotle remarks that, although no one can attain it adequately (ἀξίως μηδένα δύνασθαι τυχεῖν αὐτῆς), everybody to some extent touches upon the truth, which is why we should be interested also in those opinions which we do not share. In *Enn*. 3.5.1, Plotinus manifests the same confidence in our human ability to touch upon the truth, which is why there he says that he is interested in the views on love held by mankind in general. In *Enn*. 3.7.1, in contrast, he focuses on the views of those who attained the truth to a larger extent, and he wants to understand who attained it most completely (οἱ τυχόντες μάλιστα).

What we need to explain, however, is why Plotinus adopts a method of philosophical inquiry that Aristotle outlines in the *Metaphysics* as suitable for the purposes of that treatise, and expands it into a method of philosophical inquiry in general. Here is where Alexander, I think, becomes especially relevant. In his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, Alexander examines the methodological remarks that Aristotle makes in *Metaphysics* 3.1 very closely. What is interesting is that Alexander explicitly says that the analysis of *aporiai* is required for the discovery of any science (*On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 171.14–172.2). Thus he observes that the setting up of *aporiai* is useful to all those who are going to treat any subject (χρήσιμον πᾶσι τοῖς πραγματευσομένοις περί τινος),

since the discovery of the things sought depends on the solution of the *aporiai* (*On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 172.10–11). Finally, and most importantly, he connects Aristotle's remarks on the use of *aporiai* with the latter's claim, in *Topics* 1.2, 101a26–36, that dialectic is useful for philosophy. The connection is not without merit, as it rests on Aristotle's observation, made at *Metaphysics* 3.1, 995b3–4, that the discussion of the *aporiai* is useful because one who hears all the competing arguments on a subject is better placed to judge the truth. Alexander explains this observation by saying that, just as in the adjudication of a legal case, those who hear both sides of the case are better placed to judge the truth, so too in the case of the objects of inquiry (τῶν ζητουμένων) one can better judge the truth by setting up and solving all the possible *aporiai* (*On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 173.22–27). He adds that, with this observation, Aristotle shows the usefulness of dialectic for philosophy, for it is characteristic of dialectic to go through the *aporiai* (διαπορεῖν) and to argue on both sides (*On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 173.27–174.4).[48] By including the discussion of *aporiai* within the domain of dialectic Alexander turns it into a method which is useful for inquiry into any branch of philosophy, meaning ethics, physics, and metaphysics (*On Aristotle's Topics* 28.22–26).

Plotinus' methodological remarks in *Enn*. 3.5.1 and *Enn*. 3.7.1, I think, reflect the influence of Alexander's views on the role of the analysis of *aporiai* in all philosophical inquiries. Like Alexander, Plotinus thinks that, to succeed in a philosophical inquiry, one must set up and solve the relevant *aporiai*. But solving the relevant *aporiai* requires the examination of different philosophical (and, when available, non-philosophical) opinions on the subject matter under investigation. This is why Plotinus extensively examines the opinions of other philosophers. Aristotle seems to have a privileged place among them, but, as Porphyry remarks in his *Life of Plotinus*, the Stoics, too, are important interlocutors for him, even if they are not among the ancients.

However, there is still an issue to address, and this is the issue of explaining why Plotinus finds Alexander's remarks on the use of *aporiai* in philosophy so appealing as to base his own method of philosophical inquiry on them. The answer, I think, can be found in *Enn*. 4.3 (*Aporiai on the Soul*). Right at the beginning of that treatise we read the following:

48 The relation between these two procedures (going through the *aporiai*, and arguing on both sides) is unclear, but Alexander seems to maintain a distinction between them, as his arguments on both sides resemble more closely the arguments from *diaphonia* used by the Pyrrhonists than any dialectical procedure we may find in Aristotle. On this see Mansfeld 1988.

> It would be right to occupy ourselves with the soul, with all the points at which we find ourselves in *aporia* (ἀπορήσαντας) about it and we must arrive at a solution (εἰς εὐπορίαν) or, *continuing in just these difficulties, at least gain this advantage, that we know what is aporetic in them* (εἰδέναι τὸ ἐν τούτοις ἄπορον) (4.3.1.1–4; trans. Armstrong, slightly modified).

This passage is as clear an endorsement as possible of the method described by Aristotle in *Metaphysics* 3.1. There Aristotle explains (995a27–31) that in order to arrive at a successful resolution of the *aporiai* (εὐπορῆσαι), one must first go through the *aporiai* well (διαπορῆσαι καλῶς), because solving an *aporia* is like untying a knot, and it is impossible to untie a knot for those who do not know it (ἀγνοοῦντας). Plotinus works against the background of Aristotle's text, but introduces a novel idea. This is the idea that, even if we cannot solve the *aporiai*, and thus untie the knot, their analysis is still useful, since it allows us to know (εἰδέναι) what is aporetic, i.e. problematic, in them. Aristotle does say that an *aporia* is like a knot and that one needs to know what this knot is in order to be able to untie it, but neither he nor Alexander in his commentary ever suggests that, even if the *aporia* remains unsolved, the mere knowledge of what is problematic in it is useful. This is Plotinus' own view, and it is, of course, quintessentially Socratic, for it is the view that one needs to know that one does not know in order to have any hope of attaining some positive knowledge. The fact that Plotinus introduces this Socratic conception of knowledge to explain why one ought to start a philosophical inquiry by going through the relevant *aporiai* is significant. For it is an indication that he takes the analysis of *aporiai*, as described by Aristotle and Alexander, to be a development and a refinement of Socratic dialectic, as described by Plato in his earlier dialogues.

In conclusion, then, I would like to suggest that Plotinus' reception of Aristotle rests, first of all, on the appropriation of a specific method of philosophical inquiry, according to which a philosophical inquiry is to be conducted by setting up, developing, and solving a series of relevant *aporiai*. It is because this method requires the analysis of the views of one's predecessors that Plotinus reads Aristotle's works extensively and appears to be in a constant dialogue with him. But he does not try to harmonize Plato and Aristotle, nor does he always aim to show that the problems inherent in Aristotle's doctrines can find a solution within Platonism. Not only do the texts provide little support for the view that Plotinus has such agendas when reading Aristotle, but the very ascription of an interpretative agenda to him is incompatible with the method of inquiry he explicitly endorses.

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CHAPTER 14

The Ancient Biographical Tradition on Aristotle

Tiziano Dorandi

1 Introduction

Before we address the ancient (Greco-Latin and Arabic) biographical tradition on Aristotle, and before we consider its bearing on Aristotle's life, his doctrine, and its reception, we must try to answer two questions. The first is: *Who was Aristotle*? In other words, can we get even an approximate sense of Aristotle the man, the facts of his life, and the ideals and principles that inspired his activities as a philosopher and researcher in fourth-century Athens? This first question leads to the second, which is just as important: *What should we take the ancient biographical tradition on Aristotle to be*? Once we have answered these two questions—whether or not our answers are persuasive to everyone—we will be ready to provide an overview of the biographical tradition on Aristotle and to show whether it is helpful in mapping some landmarks in the reception of his thought in antiquity.

In order to do this, we must dispense for once and for all with the idea that

> philosophy lives a supercelestial life, beyond the confines of space and time; and if philosophers are, perforce, small spatio-temporal creatures, a minute attention to their spatio-temporal concerns will more often obfuscate than illuminate their philosophies.[1]

This is not all. We must avoid cloistering ourselves in the sort of *epochê* that tries not only to discredit particular biographical claims (whether ancient or modern), but also to question their *raison d'être*:

> Why should there be biographies of philosophers? Nietzsche held every philosophical-metaphysical doctrine to be the confession of its begetter. Husserl, on the contrary, believed that a philosophical argument was worth considering only if it aspired to the universality, to the truth-conditions of the anonymous. On neither count is there any need for

* This chapter was translated from the French by Zoli Filotas.

1 Barnes 1982: Preface, xii.

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biographical treatment. In the nature of the case, "lives" of philosophers will either consist of more or less systematic accounts of their teachings, or of gossip. The originator of the genre, Diogenes Laertius, plainly exemplifies the dilemmas and superfluities of the enterprise.[2]

2 Aristotle: Who Was He?

Famous people have always attracted the attention of the reading public, and the factual and fictional details of their lives, fixed in writing, have thus been transmitted to us in ways that are not altogether complete, reliable, or authentic. Scholars have used such texts, which have been the object of a great deal of study and controversy, as the starting point for their attempts to make profiles of the great men of antiquity. Whether they were philosophers or poets, statesmen or generals, saints or scholars, we have mined this sometimes contradictory data in an effort to distinguish the authentic from the spurious (or what we take to be spurious), filling lacunas with often risky conjectures and suppositions. Aristotle has not escaped this fate.

Zeller's reconstruction of Aristotle's biography remains one of the most balanced and reliable. Zeller does not try to fill in the gaps in the data with more plausible hypotheses, but tends to select those reports that are most worth relying on, so as to reconstruct a coherent picture. Zeller's Aristotle is a scholar "whose interests are limited to research; and since Aristotle was not Athenian, his philosophy was free of the political purposes of Socrates and Plato."[3]

With the exception of his encounter with Plato, everything in Aristotle's life was unremarkable; it stayed squarely within the bounds of the normal life of an unengaged intellectual in the Athens of his time.[4] Building on these conclusions, but also taking into account information uncovered by Düring and further studies by Gigon and Plezia, Carlo Natali insists that it is not possible to offer a complete, detailed reconstruction of Aristotle's life, but only to retrace, more or less inexactly, "the various images of Aristotle in the different eras and [to] show [. . .] how the Aristotle of Cicero's time is quite different from the *dios Aristoteles* (divine Aristotle) of Neoplatonic era."[5]

So Aristotle the metic, back in Athens (in 355/4 BC) after his stay in the Macedonian court as Alexander's tutor, freely chose an isolated way of life and

2 Steiner 1988: 15. See also Natali 2013: 1–2 and Hutchinson 2013: VIII–IX.

3 Natali 2013: 135–136.

4 Zeller 1879: 1–50.

5 Natali 2013: 142.

behaved in a way that fit perfectly with his philosophical principles. He lived apart from the political life of the city, completely absorbed in scientific studies and the creation of a philosophical system. This portrait of a figure distant from the social world, dedicated to theoretical research and to the management of his school, finds an obvious analogue in the picture of the βίος θεωρητικός—described as a perfect state of being—which Aristotle himself recommends in the final pages of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (10.6, 1176a30–8, 1179a32).[6]

This reading of Aristotle's life has had a major impact on the interpretation of the ancient biographical tradition on Aristotle. The sort of simple and withdrawn life that we attribute to Aristotle was completely uninteresting to the biographers of antiquity, whatever type of biography they hoped to write. Thus, once Aristotle's notoriety as a philosopher and the importance of his thought became clear—perhaps at the end of the Hellenistic era, after the "discovery" and widespread circulation of his πραγματεῖαι (treatises)—the biographers felt a growing need to depict the author in a way that matched the personality revealed in his texts. And so, drawing from a variety of sources, they assembled an abundant set of biographical stories that seemed capable of explaining how this personality came to be, and to appropriately express its nature.

A biographical legend had probably taken shape around Aristotle much earlier, nourished by his reputation among variously friendly and hostile parties. This would have developed from his (presumed) political ideas and his relationships with teachers (Plato), colleagues (Speusippus, Xenocrates, Eudoxus), and disciples (Theophrastus, Eudemus, Clearchus), as well as with the powerful (particularly Philip II of Macedon and Alexander the Great). Thus one could seek out and find support for this or that claim about Aristotle not only in his enormous body of literary and philosophical work, but also in private artifacts by and about him (letters, his will, honorific decrees), and in other evidence connected with his name (apothegms and oral accounts). In short, over the course of decades and centuries an Aristotelian "biographical tradition" was born and took shape. In due course, it was expressed in biographies or "lives" (βίοι). These were organized in various ways, in various states of completion, and some are still preserved. They provide an attractive but unreliable picture of Aristotle as a historical figure as well as of the vicissitudes of his library and his literary production.

6 Natali 2013: 72–95, 144, 170–174.

3 What is the Ancient Biographical Tradition on Aristotle?

Let us now try to answer the second of the questions I raised. What is the ancient biographical tradition on Aristotle? In other words, what remains of the vast stockpile of biographical materials on Aristotle in antiquity?

Düring's epochal book remains the starting point for all subsequent research on the biographical tradition on Aristotle. Düring gathers together an imposing collection of texts in Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Syriac, running from antiquity to the Renaissance. Often Düring himself provided new editions of these texts based on his own study of the manuscripts. His book is not a biography of Aristotle, but a highly useful collection of materials. He presents it in three sections, each of which contains an edition of the texts (untranslated, but with a critical apparatus and many notes about textual parallels and sources), and a commentary that tries to specify the origin, importance, and significance of each text. One might criticize Düring, on the one hand, for bringing under the aegis of "biographical tradition" too many texts that have nothing whatever to do with that literary genre, and, on the other, for neglecting to mine other veins that would have provided invaluable materials for reconstructing facts about Aristotle's life and (also, in part) about his thought: Aristotle's private writings, as well as letters, official documents, and collections of maxims or sayings.[7]

Additional materials have been assembled by Plezia (who collects the private writings) and Searby (for the gnomological tradition).[8] It remains for Düring's section on Arabic translations to be entirely reworked in light of—among other things—the discovery of a manuscript containing the complete text of Ptolemy's *Life of Aristotle*.[9]

The sources for our reconstruction of the ancient biographical tradition on Aristotle are varied, and they consist of a great many fragments and pieces of evidence. Before offering up an overall assessment of this material, tracing its history, and ultimately demonstrating its importance in the reconstruction of Aristotle's life and reception, it will be useful to give a brief survey of the texts. The tradition includes:

A. *Aristotle's Extant Treatises and Lost Works*

It is not possible to extract much information from Aristotle's treatises, short of resurrecting the thesis that they chronicle the development of his ideas, and therefore, indirectly, of his life. Even so, it is worth noting that they contain

7 Gigon 1958; Plezia 1962. Plezia 1961 also provides very useful information.

8 Plezia 1977 and Searby 1998.

9 Gutas 1986.

a few revealing details—Aristotle, for example, addressed the *Exhortation to Philosophy* [*Protrepticus*] to Themison, king of Cyprus (B 1 Düring)—as well as Aristotle's own reports of his friendly relations with Plato (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1.6, 1096a11–13).

Among his private documents, we must be aware of:

1. Aristotle's last will and testament: this text is extant in Greek and in Arabic translations, and it is undoubtedly authentic.[10]
2. The five poems of Aristotle: most important is the poem in honor of Hermias, the tyrant of Atarnaeus. Also significant is the fragment of an elegy for Eudemus of Cyprus, who was probably the protagonist of Aristotle's dialogue of the same name.[11]
3. Aristotle's letters: these documents must be approached with caution. While Plezia argues that all of the letters are authentic,[12] Gigon elects not to publish them. Particularly important—if it is authentic—is the letter from Aristotle to Alexander the Great on his policy toward the Greeks and the Persians, which has only been transmitted in an Arabic translation.[13]

B. *Official Documents*

There are also three epigraphical references to Aristotle, one of them known to us only indirectly. This last—a decree (ψήφισμα) of proxeny by the city of Athens in Aristotle's honor—is preserved in the Arabic translation of the *Life* of Ptolemy. The authenticity of this document has been studied by Matthias Haake.[14] It is a forgery, nevertheless of Greek origin, whose presence in the *Life of Ptolemy* can be explained in terms of the apologetic tendency common to all late biographies of Aristotle, especially in the neo-Platonic tradition. There are no problems concerning the authenticity of the other two. The Amphictyonic decree, which grants to Aristotle and Callisthenes the rare honor of a crown for composing a catalogue of victors of the Pythian Games, is not in conflict with the picture of a philosopher who lived at a distance from Athenian public life.[15]

10 Plezia 1977: 35–42 and Overwien 2014.

11 Plezia 1977: 1–6; Dorandi 2007a; Ford 2011; LeVen 2013.

12 Plezia 1977: 7–33.

13 Edited by Bielawski and Plezia 1970, who think it is authentic.

14 Haake 2006.

15 *Fouilles de Delphes*, t. III: *Épigraphie* 1, 400.

C. *Ancient Biographies of Aristotle*

The oldest "Life of Aristotle" of which we have any evidence is by Hermippus of Smyrna, a work in at least two books.[16] It has also been suggested that the Peripatetic Aristo of Ceos wrote a biography of Aristotle, but this remains uncertain. Aristo probably only collected the wills of his Aristotelian predecessors—from Aristotle himself to Lyco of Troas (F 16 Stork, Fortenbaugh, Van Ophuijsen and Dorandi). Various other ancient "lives" have come down to us either entire or in more or less fragmentary states:

1. Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Aristotle* (third century AD) is the most rich in detail (5.1–35). Along with a timeline and a section dedicated to biographical information about the philosopher, it contains his will, a list of the titles of his works, and an doxography, which has proven highly useful in making sense of the reception of Aristotelianism in the late Hellenistic period.[17]
2. The *Life of Aristotle* attributed to Hesychius of Miletus (sixth century AD).[18] This biography is essentially a long catalog of titles of works of Aristotle. It has a great deal in common with those of Diogenes Laertius and of the *Life* of Ptolemy.

These two "lives" go back to a single unknown Hellenistic source, now lost, which was enriched with supplementary material over the centuries. There does not seem to be any real support for the hypothesis that the "life" by Hermippus was the main source for the biographies by Diogenes and Hesychius.[19]

3. The *Vita Marciana* is named after the one manuscript in which it is very imperfectly preserved.[20]
4. The *Vita Vulgata* is a short biography of Aristotle that circulated in Neoplatonic circles. It has been falsely attributed to Ammonius of Alexandria (fifth/sixth century AD).[21]

16 Hermippus T 10, F 28–33, 73?, 89?.

17 See below 231–235..

18 Hesychius' life has been re-edited in Dorandi 2006.

19 Bollansée 1999: 52–69.

20 *Marcianus graecus* 257 (second half of the thirteenth century). In addition to Düring 1957: 94–119, we have an edition with commentary by Gigon 1962.

21 Düring 1957: 120–139.

5. The *Vita Lascaris* merely collects together excerpts from the *Vita Marciana*. It is not a remnant of the latter work's source.[22]
6. Finally, the *Vita Latina* is a medieval (thirteenth century) translation of a lost Greek biography whose text closely resembles that of the *Vita Marciana* and the *Vita Vulgata*, although it does not seem to have been derived from either of them.[23]

These biographies share several features. In particular, they describe the events of Aristotle's life in the highly apologetic manner characteristic of the Neoplatonic commentators of Alexandria. In these *Lives*, Aristotle appears as "the divine Aristotle." He meets Plato on the advice of the oracle of Delphi and he is honored by Philip and Alexander the Great. Episodes like the story of Hermias of Atarnaeus go unmentioned in favor of details more flattering to Aristotle, like his supposed trip with Alexander to the Orient.

The hypothesis that these "lives" derive in whole or in part from a single source, the *Life* written in Greek by a certain Ptolemy (fourth century AD?), remains highly uncertain. The original Greek text of Ptolemy's text has been lost. Attempts to reconstruct it—based on evidence in the Neoplatonic "lives," two Syriac translations,[24] and several translations into Arabic[25]—have not established conclusive results. The text, perhaps complete, of the Arabic version of the *Life* of Ptolemy has been discovered in a manuscript from Istanbul (*Aya Sofya* 4833, f. 10a–18a. sixteenth century), which remains partly unedited.[26] Its title is probably *Ptolemy, The Will of Aristotle, the Pinax of his Work, and a Brief Life, To Gallus*.[27] The identity of this Ptolemy, known as *al-garīb* ("the unknown" or "the stranger"), remains uncertain, and the question whether the manuscript contains the complete *Life of Aristotle* remains unanswered.

It has been suggested that the author is the grammarian Ptolemy Chennos (first century AD), or a Neoplatonist from the fourth century AD also mentioned by Iamblichus and Proclus.[28] Plezia suggests that Ptolemy may have been an unknown philosophical scholar from the fourth century AD.[29] He calls him Ptolemaeus "*Pinacographus*," to distinguish him from the other Ptolemies. On

22 Düring 1957: 122, 140–141.
23 Düring 1957: 142–163. See Plezia 1962: 128–129.
24 Düring 1957: 183–189.
25 See Gutas: 1986: 22–28, 34–36, Gutas 1988: 201–206, Dietze-Mager 2015 and 2015a.
26 Only the edition of the catalogue of Aristotle's works can be found in Hein 1985: 415–439.
27 Gutas 1986: 23.
28 Toulouse 2012.
29 Plezia 1975 and Plezia 1985.

his account, Gallus, to whom the work is dedicated, turns out to be none other than Flavius Claudius Constantius Gallus, the half-brother of the emperor Julian, and Caesar of the Roman Empire. The *Life* would then have been written in Antioch in the period from AD 351 to 354. More boldly, Plezia concludes, ultimately because of textual differences between the Arabic text on the one hand and the *Vita Marciana, Vita Vulgata*, and *Vita Latina* on the other, that the *Life* of Ptolemy is not the single, complete model for the later texts, but that it represents a different, originally Neoplatonic tradition whose ultimate source is Andronicus of Rhodes. Plezia's conclusion is nowadays widely accepted:

> All the biographers who drew upon Ptolemy's text knew it largely in the form in which it is extant in the Aya Sofya manuscript [...] Since the transmission of Ptolemy's text in the manuscript is independent of the biographical tradition and there is no contamination between the two, it is evident that the manuscript text represents the only recension in which Ptolemy's *Vita* was known in Arabic [...] the Arabic translation faithfully reflects its Syriac original. The final question of the Greek archetype and of the fidelity of the Syriac translation to it will have to be left open for lack of documentation.[30]

3.1 *Accounts by Ancient Authors*

The most significant, aside from the long account by Aristocles of Messene and the very harsh attack on Aristotle in Philodemus of Gadara's *On Rhetoric* (both of which we will consider in a moment), are a brief sketch by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, several passages by Plutarch and Strabo, and a passage by Aelian.[31] Analysis of these texts reveals two broad biographical currents on Aristotle. One is sympathetic, the other is hostile, and both are ancient. This is why any use of these materials in reconstructing Aristotle's life calls for a careful, rigorous analysis allowing us to distinguish between the spurious and the authentic. Alongside Diogenes Laertius (5.9–10), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Letter to Ammaeus* 1.5) proves useful information about the sequence of events in Aristotle's life that may plausibly be traced back, through the *Chronology* of Apollodorus of Athens (*FGrHist* 244 F 38), to Philochorus, the late fourth-century Athenian historian (*FGrHist* 328 F 223).

The main source for the critical stream is the account in Book 7 of Aristocles of Messene's *On Philosophy* (F 2 Chiesara). The evidence is preserved by

30 Gutas 1986: 28–29. See Goulet-Toulouse 2012.

31 See Natali 2013: 130–135, 178–180.

Eusebius of Caesarea, who includes it in his presentation of the defense made of Aristotle by the Peripatetic Aristocles:[32]

> (1) How is it possible that, as Epicurus says in his *Letter on Occupations*, he [sc. Aristotle] squandered his patrimony when he was a young man, then forced his way into military service, and, being unsuccessful in this, he was reduced to selling medicines, and then, after Plato's school had been opened to all, he attached himself to him? (2) Or how could anyone accept what Timaeus of Tauromenium says in his *Histories*, that when advanced in years he shut the doors of a surgery with no reputation and other undistinguished doors? (3) Or who would believe what Aristoxenus the musicologist says in his life of Plato? He states that during his wandering away from home, certain non-Athenians rose up against him and established a Peripatos in opposition to him. Some therefore think that he is referring to Aristotle, though Aristoxenus always speaks of Aristotle with reverence. (4) One may also reasonably say that the *Memoirs* of Alexinus the Eristic are ridiculous. For he makes Alexander when a boy, in conversation with his father Philip, pour contempt upon Aristotle's doctrines, while approving Nicagoras, called Hermes. (5) Also, Eubulides in his book against Aristotle is manifestly mendacious, first in bringing forward some silly poems allegedly written by others, concerning his marriage and his intimacy with Hermias, and secondly in asserting that he offended Philip, and did not come to visit Plato when dying, and that he destroyed his books. (6) As to the accusation of Democharis against the philosophers, what shall we say? [...] For he says that letters of Aristotle were intercepted written against the Athenian state, and that he betrayed Stagira, his native city, to the Macedonians, and further that when Olynthus was destroyed, at the place where the booty was sold he pointed out to Philip the most wealthy of the Olynthians. (7) Foolish also are the calumnies that have been brought against him by Cephisodorus, the disciple of Isocrates, saying that he was luxurious and a gourmand, and other things of that kind. (8) But they are all surpassed in folly by the statements of Lyco, who styles himself a Pythagorean. For he affirms that Aristotle offered to his wife after her death a sacrifice such as the Athenians offer to Demeter, and that he used to bathe in warm oil and then sell it; and that when he was leaving for Chalcis, the custom-house officers found in the vessel seventy-five bronze dishes.

32 Chiesara 2001: 12–17 and 68–76.

Aristocles' defense of Aristotle begins (9–11) with the argument that all of these accusers are unreliable because "they do not all make the same charges, but each says things of his own." Thus, Aristotle is targeted by the envious "sophists of his time, both for his friendship with kings, and for his superiority in argument." Nevertheless, Aristocles continues, there remain two credible claims about his life that have drawn criticism from certain quarters:

> (12) One, that he married Pythias, who was sister by birth and daughter by adoption of Hermias, in order to flatter him. At any rate, Theocritus of Chius wrote this epigram [. . .][33] The other charge was that Aristotle was ungrateful to Plato. (13) Now, among the many authors who have written of Hermias and Aristotle's friendship with him is Apellicon; anyone who has read his books will soon cease to speak evil of the two men. (14) But with regard to his marriage to Pythias he has himself made sufficient defense in his letters to Antipater. For after the death of Hermias he married her because of his affection for him, she being also a wise and good woman, but in misfortune by reason of the calamities which had overtaken her brother.

The first of these charges goes back to Aristotle himself. After Hermias was executed on the orders of Artaxerxes III Ochus of Persia, Aristotle dedicated a statue to him and composed a poem to virtue (ἀρετή) and an epigram in his memory. Aristocles' (frankly feeble) response clarifies why the authors of Neoplatonic "lives" tended to empty their accounts of any reference to the relationship between Aristotle and Hermias. The second charge, of ingratitude toward his master Plato, is parallel to a passage by Aelian (*Various Histories* 3.19). The episode in question takes place in the Academy while Speusippus is away because of illness and Xenocrates is travelling. The story revolves around a young Aristotle and an aging Plato, weakened by his age and starting to lose his memory. Aristotle attacks Plato and asks him such arrogant questions that he is driven out of the Academy. On his return, Xenocrates asks for information, speaks with Plato, criticizes Speusippus harshly for having ceded the promenade (περίπατος) to Aristotle, and attacked the Stagirite with such determination that he drove him away and restored Plato to his usual haunts.[34]

Both cases seem to amount to *post eventum* reconstructions rooted in a biographical tradition. It is revealing to compare the second account to the testimony of Diogenes Laertius (5.2): "He (Aristotle) seceded from the Academy

33 *Supplementum Hellenisticum* 738.

34 Bollansée 2001: 72–99.

while Plato was still alive. Hence the remark attributed to the latter: 'Aristotle spurns me, as colts kick out at the mother who bore them (γεννηθέντα)'."[35] The supposed bad blood between Aristotle and Xenocrates gave rise to a vast body of ancient literature whose background may be an attempt to explain why Aristotle anonymously attacks Xenocrates in his treatises.

A long passage from Book 8 of Philodemus of Gadara's *On Rhetoric* (first century BC) occupies an important place among ancient biographical reports about Aristotle. The text has recently been reedited by Blank and independently studied by Privitera.[36] In it, Philodemus discusses the lectures Aristotle gave in the afternoon (τῆς δείλης), directed against the teachings of Isocrates. The discussion, which begins by reworking a verse from Euripides' *Philoctetes*—"it is shameful to remain silent while allowing Isocrates to speak"[37]—conveys significant additional information about Aristotle's early writings (especially the *Protrepticus*). An important question is whether this course dates back to the young Aristotle's stay at the Academy or to a later period, after Aristotle had already established his own school in the Lyceum. On this score, Blank concludes that "we are not in a position to rule out Aristotelian lectures on rhetoric in the Academy, but there is nothing in the ancient testimonies to make us believe in them, either." Privitera is less skeptical. The lectures on rhetoric, he says, date back to Aristotle's days in the Academy, though it remains uncertain whether this course took place in the afternoon as later ones did in the Lyceum.[38]

The tradition sympathetic to Aristotle probably began with Callisthenes of Olynthus (Aristotle's nephew) and Philochorus of Athens, in the fourth century BC. A significant portion of the ancient biographical writings on Aristotle, marked by a particular interest in his relations with Alexander, dates back to the Hellenistic period. But it was in the first centuries of the empire that Atticus, Numenius, Aristocles, and Alexander of Aphrodisias began the true renaissance in the study of Aristotle's philosophy (in an attempt to reconcile Plato and Aristotle also found in the Neoplatonic "lives")[39] and thereby

35 Trans. Hicks. The verb γεννηθέντα is corrupt. Düring replaces it with κορεσθέντα, for "who has had enough of its mother's milk," which he derives from Aelian *Various Histories* 4.9, which recounts the story in greater detail.

36 Blank 2007 and Privitera 2007. For a treatment of this episode in the context of the Epicurean reception of Aristotle, see the first chapter in this volume.

37 F 796.2 Kannicht (trans. Blank). Euripides had "barbarians" instead of "Isocrates." Diogenes Laertius (5.2–3), quite differently, has "Xenocrates."

38 Blank 2007: 28; Privitera 2007: 49.

39 Chiaradonna 2012: 85–102, 276.

effected a renewed interest in his life that endured through the Middle Ages and into the modern era.[40]

3.2 *The Greek Gnomological Tradition*

Searby's book offers "a systematic collection of all the known sayings linked with Aristotle in the Greek gnomological sources." His purpose is "to relate this material to the whole context of what is here called the Greek gnomological tradition and to offer a commentary on the sayings with special emphasis on the question of how they came to be attributed to Aristotle."[41] His work fills a lacuna in a mostly unknown and neglected area,[42] but this job remains to be completed with a parallel study of documents in Arabic.[43]

The Greek texts, whose dates and origins remain uncertain, sometimes reveal a close reading of Aristotle's work and a sustained interest in his life and his thought. Some gnomes and χρεῖαι come from Aristotle's books, others are inspired by his philosophy, and still others reflect particular episodes in his life.

The following two texts (gnom. 37a–b Searby) are an interesting example, one that allows us better to discern the relations between Aristotle, Callisthenes, Theophrastus, Plato, and Xenocrates.[44]

> They say that Aristotle made a remark about Theophrastus and Callisthenes similar to the one Plato had made with regard to Xenocrates and himself as mentioned earlier.[45] Since Theophrastus interpreted every concept with an excessively quick wit, while the other was a slower nature, Aristotle said that the one needed a bit, the other a spur (37a).
>
> Once, when Theophrastus and Callisthenes were declaiming for him (Aristotle), Theophrastus being eloquent in his speech, but the other getting on more slowly in his declamation, he said, "Theophrastus needs to be fitted with a bit, but Callisthenes needs a goad" (37b).

40 Düring 1957: 164–179.

41 Searby 1998: 11.

42 Gigon 1958: 8.

43 Gutas 1986: 30.

44 Searby 1998: 191–192.

45 The reference is to an episode related by Diogenes Laertius 4.6, in which Plato compares Xenocrates to Aristotle, saying "The one needed a spur, the other a bridle" (Hicks' translation).

Two more passages nicely illustrate the familiarity with Aristotle's philosophical work and his reception exhibited in this literary genre (fr. 36 and fr. 82 Searby).[46] The source of the first gnome is the *Eudemian Ethics* (7.12, 1245b19–21); it is not hard to see the second as a paraphrase of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (4.11, 1126a4–8) very similar to the Latin one recorded in the *Auctoritates Aristotelis*.

> In the second volume of the *Memorabilia*, Favorinus says that he always used to say "No friend has he who has friends," but this is also in Book 7 of the *Ethics* (fr. 36).
>
> The same man said that those who do not get angry when they should are fools, that those who get angry at what they should not are senseless, and that those who put up with abuse are servile (fr. 82).

4 The Spurious and the Authentic in the Ancient Biographical Tradition on Aristotle

Let me briefly return to the crucial question of the spurious and the authentic in the biographical tradition on Aristotle. Dimitri Gutas raised this question with regard to the Arabic works, and I propose to expand it to the Greco-Latin tradition.[47] He criticizes Düring's hypothesis that "nine late episodes of a *Vita Ptolemaei*, two Greek [i.e. the *Vita Marciana* and the *Vita Vulgata*], one Latin, two Syriac, and four Arabic *vitae* [...] were extracts from a *vita* written by a certain Ptolemy."[48] This conclusion, Gutas says, misrepresents both the contents and the sources of the Arabic "lives," to say nothing of the Greek, Latin, and Syriac texts, and thus pre-empts the whole question of the spurious and the authentic. According to Düring, in the Arabic tradition, "whatever is [...] authentic derives from 'Ptolemy' ('including additions from the prolegomena'), and whatever is spurious [...] is a fictitious addition in Syriac or Arabic."[49]

Two specific aspects of the methodological question formulated by Gutas for the study of the Arabic biographies—one concerning procedure, the other definitions—apply just as well, *mutatis mutandis*, to the Greco-Latin tradition. The procedure, he writes, "has of necessity to be based upon an investigation

46 Searby 1998: 189–190, 229.

47 Gutas 1986: 18–22, 34.

48 Düring 1971: 264.

49 Gutas 1986: 17.

of the sources that will take into account [...] firm philological evidence." Ancient biographers, particularly Greek ones, confronted a number of biographical, historical, and philosophical sources whose authenticity often was not obvious. With these sources in hand, the biographer's task was

> twofold, selecting and editing. In the performance of the former task, apart from considerations of brevity and length which determined the *amount* of material to be included in the entry, the biographer was guided solely by his unaided critical sense in selecting the *quality* of his material, i.e. in discriminating between the spurious and the authentic. [...] In the performance of his editorial task, the biographer [...] could copy his sources eponymously or anonymously; in full or abridged form; verbatim or paraphrastically; in order or haphazardly; and with or without editorial glosses.[50]

We may now turn to the second aspect of the problem, the definitions: how are spurious and authentic to be understood in the context of the Greek and Arabic sources? The Arabic tradition raises more problems than the Greek, in particular the problem of what "can be called 'tendentiousness' rather than fraud or forgery, but in literary history it has played a role at least equally significant as either." This is a problem of particular importance in the Arabic world, especially with regard to "an independent life of Aristotle of late Alexandrian origin" used in the *Ṣiwān al-ḥikma* (*ca*. 985–1030), and very different from that of Ptolemy.

Such considerations can also serve as a warning against the tendentiousness of the Alexandrian scholars, authors of the Neoplatonic lives of Aristotle,

> which clearly colors their very understanding and *recording* of the history of philosophy in general and of the life of Aristotle in particular, [and] is thus a spuriousness different in kind from fraud and forgery in that it seems to be a collective enterprise, reflecting unconsciously the views of a society, or at least the prevalent views of a segment of a society, as opposed to the work of the individual forger which addresses itself consciously to the prevailing views and tastes of a (segment of a) society.[51]

50 Gutas 1986: 19.

51 Gutas 1986: 20–22.

5 Diogenes Laertius as Repository of a Late Hellenistic Reading of Aristotle's Philosophy

The time has come to present a concrete and paradigmatic picture of the reception of Aristotle's philosophy in the biographical tradition, in the form of a passage from the *Life of Aristotle* by Diogenes Laertius (5.27–34). After his list of the works of Aristotle, Diogenes records a brief summary of Aristotle's thought that is at first sight rather astonishing.[52]

According to Paul Moraux,[53] Diogenes summarizes Aristotle's doctrine on the basis of a very old doxographical document, clearly anterior to Andronicus, which he was content to copy out or to adapt, and which he took to be valuable precisely because of its age. Richard Bodéüs, on the other hand, has highlighted the considerable Stoic influence on this account of Aristotelian philosophy.[54]

The summary has four parts: (1) the subdivisions of philosophy (28), (2) logic (28–29), (3) ethics (30–31), and (4) physics (32–34).[55] The opening ("In them [sc. Aristotle's many books] his views are these"), and the closing ("He declared much else about many things which it would be a long business to enumerate") are commonplace formulas used to mark transitions. Thus, there is no reason to suppose that the catalogue of Aristotle's work and the summary are related to each other.

Here is a translation of the summary, along with a few words of commentary:[56]

> (28) Philosophy is twofold, practical and theoretical. To the practical belong the ethical [part] and the political, in which both what concerns the city and what concerns the household are outlined. To the theoretical, physics and logic, of which logic is developed not as part of the whole, but as an instrument.

Moraux thinks that the division of philosophy into practical and theoretical parts has a warrant in Aristotle; if so, this might show that Diogenes cobbled together his account from a variety of sources.[57] Bodéüs argues that the text

52 Dorandi 2007, Sharples 2010: 31–34, and Chiaradonna 2011: 101–102.

53 Moraux 1986.

54 Bodéüs 1995.

55 Moraux 1986: 269 already acknowledges the Stoic origins of this tripartition.

56 Sharples 2010: 31–33. Sharples' translation slightly emended in light of the new text of Dorandi 2013.

57 Moraux 1949: 15–16, 40–41 and Moraux 1986: 269.

is quite coherent, and suggests that Diogenes worked with a single model, of Stoic inspiration. The presence of Stoic ideas in the first part of the summary "is too constant, and affects too many details, for us not to see it as a dominant if not exclusive influence, and for us not to give up [...] on the idea that Diogenes might have drawn awkwardly from several incompatible sources."[58]

> He [sc. Aristotle] clearly proposed that it has two goals, what is persuasive and what is true. He used two capacities for each of these, dialectic and rhetoric for what is persuasive, analytic and philosophy for what is true; he omits nothing which leads to discovery, to judgment or to utility. (29) With a view to discovery he handed down [to us, in] the *Topics* and the *Methodics*, a multiplicity of premises, from which one may have an abundance of persuasive arguments for [solving] problems. For judgment [he handed down] the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics* (by the *Prior* the premises are judged, by the *Posterior* their combination is examined). For utility, there are the [works] on contests and those concerned with questioning <and> sophistical refutations and syllogisms and things similar to these. As criterion of truth, in the case of things that actually appear he declared it to be sense perception, but in the case of ethics and things (concerning the city, the household, and the law) intellect.

There is no trace of the classification of the logical treatises according to three operations (εὕρεσις, κρίσις, χρῆσις) in Aristotle, and no reason to connect it to a passage from the commentary on the *Prior Analytics* by Alexander of Aphrodisias (1.3–7 Wallies), who says that philosophy aims at the discovery (εὕρεσις), construction (σύστασις) and use (χρῆσις) of logic for the sake of the most important objects. Diogenes' overview, quite differently, focuses on dialectic and says that the purpose of logic is to discover likely propositions, evaluate premises and conclusions, and put the results of these processes to work in agonistic or eristic debates.[59]

Bodéüs attaches a lot of importance to the word κρίσις (translated as "discernment"), which calls to mind the essential function of Stoic logic, and which he claims designates the intention or the main goal of the logic Diogenes attributes to Aristotle. Bodéüs connects εὕρεσις with "demonstrative argument," claiming that the mission of "discovery" is taken on by the part of logic dedicated exclusively to the "plausible" (πιθανόν). Finally, χρῆσις indicates "the

58 Bodéüs 1995: 562–563, 578–579.

59 Moraux 1986: 270–271.

use either of judgements and arguments identified as true, or of the rational capacities acquired by familiarity with argumentative forms."[60]

> (30) He set forth one [ethical] end, the employment of virtue in a complete life. He said that happiness was a completion made up of goods of three [types of] goods: those concerning the soul, which indeed he calls first in power; secondly those concerning the body, health, and strength and beauty and the like; thirdly external [goods], wealth, and good family and reputation and things like these. Virtue is not sufficient for happiness; for there is also need of bodily and external goods, since the wise man will be unhappy in pains, poverty, and the like. But wickedness is sufficient for unhappiness, even if it possesses external and bodily goods to the greatest extent possible. (31) He said that the virtues do not imply one another; for it is possible for someone to be wise, and similarly just, but also profligate and lacking in self-control. He said that the wise man is not free from passions but moderate in passions. He defined friendship as an equality of reciprocal goodwill; of it one [type] is for relations, another erotic and another for strangers. Love is not only for intercourse but also for philosophy. The wise man will fall in love and engage in politics, marry, and be the courtier of a king. There are three ways of life, the theoretical, the practical, and the devoted to pleasure, and of these he preferred the theoretical. Ordinary studies are useful for the attainment of virtue.

Here we move on the section on ethics. Diogenes does not summarize Aristotle's doctrines in the *Ethics*. Rather, he answers a number of questions often raised in doxographical reports. The presentation and terminology here are most likely of Stoic origin. The definition of the chief end (τέλος) as "the employment of virtue in a complete life" nevertheless recalls a phrase employed by Aristotle (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1.6, 1098a18). In Aristotle, however, this is not the definition of the chief end but of happiness, a difference best understood as a "shortcut" rather than a mistake.[61]

> (32) In natural [philosophy] he explained more than anyone else, so that he gave explanations even of the smallest things. And for this reason he wrote not a small number of books of notes on nature. He declared god to be incorporeal, as did Plato. [God's] providence extends as far as the

60 Bodéüs 1995: 574–579.

61 Moraux 1986: 275.

> heavenly [bodies], and he himself is unmoved; things on earth are governed by their sympathy with [the heavenly bodies]. Besides the four elements there is another, a fifth, of which the heavenly things are composed. Its movement is of a different sort, for it is circular. The soul is incorporeal, being the first actuality of a natural and instrumental body potentially possessing life. (33) By "actuality" he means that what has some incorporeal form. This is twofold according to him. One is potential, as the [figure of] Hermes in the wax which possesses a suitability to receive the shape and the statue is in the bronze; but the actuality of the completed Hermes or statue is said to be "in disposition." [He said] "of a natural body," since of bodies some are fashioned by hand, like those made by craftsmen, for example a tower or a boat; some by nature like plants and the [bodies] of animals. He said "instrumental," that is constructed with a view to some end, as sight in order to see and hearing in order to hear. "Potentially possessing life," that is, of itself. (34) The "potential" is twofold, that according to the disposition and that in actuality. In actuality, in the way in which the person who is awake is said to possess soul; according to the disposition, as one who is asleep. So that the latter too should fall under [the definition], he added "potential."

This last part of Diogenes' report is dedicated to physics. As with ethics, the information in this section is taken from a doxographical source. Nothing here, other than the doctrine of the fifth element and the definition of the soul, can be found in Aristotle's extant writings. Diogenes opens this section with a flattering description of Aristotle's unsurpassed interest in the search for causes (he describes him with a neologism meaning "most ready at giving causes," αἰτιολογικώτατος). Traces of the same tradition can be found in a discussion of Posidonius. Strabo tells us that there was a great deal of search for the causes in the style of Aristotle (πολύ . . . τὸ αἰτιολογικόν . . . καὶ τὸ ἀριστοτελίζον) in Posidonius.[62]

In connection with this last comment, Andrea Falcon recalls Atticus, a Neoplatonist of the second century AD who contemptuously describes Aristotle as "the scribe of nature" (τῆς φύσεως γραμματεύς). He suggests that this formula reflects an older tradition, skeptical of the philosophical value of Aristotelian research on plants and animals, in contrast with the evidence here

62 Strabo 2.3.8.

of an Aristotle considered the greatest of all investigators into the causes of natural phenomena.[63]

After developing a view about God and divine providence (foreign to Aristotle, but recurrent in doxographies), the summary closes with some considerations about the soul, based on Aristotle's definition of it and followed by a brief commentary. The definition combines two lines from the *On the Soul* (2.1, 412a27–28 and 412b5–6): "soul," Aristotle writes, "is the first actuality of a natural body having in it the capacity for life," and this natural body is described as "instrumental" (ὀργανικόν). The fact that this same definition can be found in the doxographical tradition and in Alexander of Aphrodisias shows that Diogenes' source did not have direct access to the Aristotelian treatise *On the Soul*.[64]

This passage, like those from Sextus Empiricus on the criterion (*Against the Professors* 7.217–226), reveals an imperfect knowledge of Aristotle's treatises, and its approach to his philosophy and that of the Peripatetics is strongly influenced by Hellenistic philosophical systems These accounts can be traced all the way back to the middle of the late Hellenistic era. Plausibly, such abridgments and reports helped to spread a more popular style of Aristotelianism to non-specialist readers than the work of authors with access to Aristotle's treatises. In the end, Diogenes and Sextus testify to the longevity of these traditions, which survived into the second and third century AD, when the production of commentaries on Aristotle was already established and in full flower. When we read these passages in Diogenes, it is as if we are leaping backward to a moment at least three centuries earlier than the study of Aristotle that was current in his time.[65]

6 Conclusion

I have tried to answer the two question I asked at the beginning of this chapter—*Who was Aristotle*? and *What should we take the ancient biographical tradition on Aristotle to be*? At the same time, I have mapped some of the landmarks in the reception of Aristotle's thought in this body of literature. The results may be limited, but they are nevertheless interesting and consequential.

63 Atticus fr. 7 Des Places. The same text is reproduced anonymously in a "doxographical" entry in the *Suda* (α 3930 Adler), which does not come from the *Life* by Hesychius (Düring 1957: 327). See Falcon 2012: 160, 278n9–10.

64 See Moraux 1986: 283–288.

65 Chiaradonna 2011: 101–102.

Both as a metic and above all because of life choices well matched with his philosophical ideas, Aristotle lived an isolated and studious life, entirely caught up in scientific and theoretical research and in his educational program at the Lyceum.

The biographical tradition tries, in various ways, to fill in the gaps left by a normal life of philosophical research. The tradition unfolds in two broad currents, one of which probably goes back to Hermippus of Smyrna (third century BC) and the other to the Neoplatonic *milieu* (starting in the fourth century AD). There is also an Arabic tradition, parts of which are drawn from lost Greek sources.

A "biographical legend" took form early on, attaching various friendly and hostile accounts to Aristotle's name. The sources for the reconstruction of these biographical veins are varied. They include an enormous amount of evidence which must, in every case, be analyzed and studied in order to establish their importance and reliability which separates the authentic from the spurious.

In the biographical as well as the gnomological tradition, we ultimately find clear traces both of Aristotle's own doctrine and of doxographical texts which combine readings of Aristotelianism from several centuries, filtered through Hellenistic and Neoplatonic philosophy. Two concrete examples are preserved in Sextus Empiricus and Diogenes Laertius.

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CHAPTER 15

Aristotle in the Aëtian *Placita*

Jaap Mansfeld

1 Aristotle in the *Placita*

Because we still have the school treatises, the evidence of the Aëtian *Placita*, the foundational doxographical treatise that deals with physical philosophy,[1] is of little value for our information about Aristotle. But it is of unquestionable interest for the reception of his philosophy in antiquity. His presence makes itself felt in several ways. The first and most obvious presentation of his thought is constituted by the no less than 57 extant lemmata (or paragraphs of chapters) that contain his name-label, distributed over the whole treatise: 14 in Book 1 on principles and general concepts, 18 in Book 2 on cosmology, 7 in Book 3 on meteorology and the earth, 8 in Book 4 on psychology and some epistemology, and 10 in Book 5 on (mainly) human physiology.[2] The second form of presence consists of lemmata that are abstracts from the school treatises dealing with the *doxai* of others. Because our reconstruction of and commentary on the *Placita* are still a work in progress, though nearing their conclusion as I write (November 2014), it is not yet possible to give a precise number. The third and perhaps most important form of presence is constituted by the Aristotelian methodology that informs the treatise.

As far as I am aware the lemmata containing Aristotelian *doxai* have attracted little attention, as people looked for remains of what has been lost, and not much was discovered here. Rose included a single example of such a fragment, 1.18.6 (text as extant in S).[3] Walzer included 5.20.1 (extant in both

1 The only edition, virtually complete, presenting Ps-Plutarch and the excerpts from Stobaeus in parallel columns and further material at the foot of the page, is still Diels 1879: 268–444. A reconstruction in one column by David T. Runia and the present writer is in preparation. For our preparatory studies see Mansfeld and Runia 1999–2009. A short introduction to doxography is provided by Runia 1999. Abbreviations to be used hereinafter: P = Ps-Plutarch, S = Stobaeus, T = Theodoretus, A = Aëtius, AD = Arius Didymus, DG = *Doxographi Graeci*. Aëtian passages are cited by the book, chapter, and lemmata numbers of DG.

2 Only Plato (72), the Stoics (67) and Empedocles (60) are cited more often, while Democritus (56) come close, followed by Epicurus (44), Anaxagoras (41), Pythagoras (36), Thales (23), and Heraclitus (23). (These numbers have been computed by Dr. E. Jeremiah.)

3 Rose 1862: fr. ^{2}192 = Rose 1886: fr. ^{3}201, from *On the Pythagoreans* = fr. 11 Ross, 166 Gigon.

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P and S) among the fragments of the lost dialogues, but should not have done so.[4] Ross in his collection of selected fragments included both these items, and added one more, namely 2.29.4 (from S).[5] Effe in his study of the lost *On Philosophy* argued that fr. 21 ^{3}R = 19c Ross of this work is echoed in 1.7.8–9.[6]

Moraux in his massive study of the Aristotelian tradition failed to include a chapter on the *Placita*.[7] But Gigon, apart from citing 1.18.6 and 2.29.4 separately, at least included the whole series of Aëtian lemmata together as fragment 19 in his unwieldy edition of the *Librorum deperditorum fragmenta*, placing them between excerpts from Cicero (fr. 18) and fragments of AD dealing with physics (fr. 20).[8] He printed Diels' text from *DG*, following the double column system but without including comments or a critical apparatus, and only allowing himself a few interventions in the text. The advantage of this presentation is that it allows a quick overview of the *Placita* material that refers to Aristotle by name.

2 Three Forms of Presence

The lemmata of fr. 19 Gigon may be roughly divided into three groups. The first consists of fifteen *doxai* purportedly shared with others. The second and third consist of *doxai* attributed to Aristotle alone. Those of group two (just as, to some extent, those of group one) present his views in a version according to a later *interpretatio*, while those of group three do so in a more or less historically correct way.

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4 Walzer 1934: *On Philosophy* fr. 22 = fr. 22 Ross. Note that this begins with "Plato and Aristotle." Not included by Flashar *& al.* 2006. The fragments from *On the Pythagoreans* are absent here because they will be dealt with in another volume of the Berlin Aristotle.

5 Ross 1955: *On the Pythagoreans* fr. 16 (= 170 Gigon) on the research of Aristotle and Philip of Opus, apparently following Diels *DG* 215, but oddly also including the second part of the lemma. Cf. below n. 16.

6 Effe 1970: 24–29. The resemblance is real, but to claim fragment status goes too far; see Runia 1996a: 568–569 = 2010: 365–366.

7 Moraux 1973–84.

8 Gigon 1987. He also includes lemmata with the name-label "Peripatetics" only, which I omit from the above count. I also omit (sections of) lemmata, found in S only, that are to be attributed to AD, as Diels already suspected in some cases, mostly followed by Wachsmuth: namely 1.11.4, the greater part of 1.23.2, of 3.1.7, of 3.2.3, of 3.7.4, and part of 1.29.4; see Runia 1996b. For S's version of 1.18.6 see below, n. 14 and text thereto.

Diels—one always has to go back to the master—divided the Aëtian evidence for Aristotle into three too, but in a different way.[9] His argument moves toward conclusions rather than from the evidence. In the first place, he says, no one is more often cited as a witness in the *Placita* than Aristotle. As evidence he first refers to in his view indubitable Aëtian citations of book titles, namely *Physics* (followed by book number and an only slightly changed *verbatim* quotation) and *On the Pythagoreans* (followed by a paraphrase) at 1.18.6 (references only in S), and to references elsewhere to (the) Pythagoreans that should be related to these titles (smuggling in the obscure "Leophanes, whom Aristotle has mentioned" of 5.7.5 (P alone), whose affiliation is not known).[10] In the second place, he lists seven accurate abstracts concerned with Aristotelian doctrines, which in his view must go back to a close reading of the school treatises.[11] These title citations and accurate abstracts according to Diels must have been added to the earlier and genuine stock of *Placita* by no one other than A himself, for, as he believes, the school treatises only became easily accessible after their (purported) edition by Andronicus of Rhodes.

Thirdly, he cites 2.11.3 (note his typo: 2.10 for 2.11), where S, after the text of the lemma shared with P, has the words "at all events he says as follows in the works *On the Physical Lectures* and the *Heaven*."[12] Diels has no difficulty in proving that this sentence with its bungled title references has indeed been added by S: the formula γοῦν + title is regularly used to introduce S's *verbatim* quotations from a Platonic dialogue. These two title citations are therefore not Aëtian. But this is an option he fails to consider for the references to the Aristotelian titles plus quotes at 1.18.6, although these too can satisfactorily be explained as interpolations by S, here coalesced with an Aëtian lemma rather than introduced as a better alternative, just as passages from AD are often enough substituted for Aëtian lemmata by S. In our forthcoming commentary, we argue at some length that this is the case, thus removing one of the pillars of

9 *DG* 215–216.

10 Aristotle does so at *On the Generation of Animals* 4.1, 765a21–25, but the Aëtian text does not cite a title.

11 From *Physics*: 1.29.2 (the section shared by P and S) ~ 2.5, 197a5–10, 1.29.3 (idem) ~ 2.6, 197a36, and 1.23.2 (idem) ~ 3.2, 202a7 cf. 8.1, 251a9(-10); from *On the Soul*: 4.8.6 (in S only) ~ 2.11, 424a4 and 2.6, 418a6(-7), and 4.9.3 (in S only) ~ 2.6, 418a12, from *On Generation and Corruption*: 1.9.1 (in both P and S) ~ 1.4, 320a2(-4) (cf. 1.3.21), and from *On the Generation of Animals*: 5.3.1 (in P only) ~ 4.1, 766b1(2-)3.

12 *DG* 215–216. S 1.23.2: 201.1–2 Wachsmuth λέγει γοῦν ἐν τοῖς Περὶ τῆς φυσικῆς ἀκροάσεως καὶ Οὐρανοῦ λόγοις οὕτως. Followed not by a quotation from Aristotle but by a rehash of part of AD fr. 9 Diels from S 1.22.1c.

Diels' argument.[13] The mention of the research of Aristotle and Philip of Opus[14] at 2.29.4 in S, argued to be Aëtian by Diels, who attributed the reference to Aristotle to the lost *On the Pythagoreans*, may likewise have been interpolated by S. There are at any rate no references to book titles here.[15]

We next should advert to his treatment of an indisputable abstract from one of the school treatises, namely 1.15.2 (in both P and S) for the Pythagorean definition of color from Aristotle, *On the Senses* 3, 439a30–31.[16] This Diels adroitly cites among the references to the Pythagoreans related to the book titles of his first category. There are of course many more references in the *Placita* that pertain to pre-Aristotelian doctrines. But according to Diels' still very influential interpretation such references, unlike that concerned with this color definition, derive from Theophrastus, for the most part from the lost work called by him (and his *Doktorvater* Usener) *Physikôn Doxai*, not *Physikai doxai*.[17] Pride of place was awarded to antecedents in an extant work, namely Theophrastus' *On the Senses*, for several lemmata in the chapters on the senses in Book 4.[18] But why make exception for the Pythagorean *doxa* on color? The reason must be that the Aristotelian antecedent is extant, while the Pythagoreans are not mentioned in the *On the Senses*, though in this work the color theories of Plato and Democritus are discussed at appropriate length. But Aristotelian antecedents for numerous references to earlier *doxai* in the *Placita* are extant as well, while we almost never know what Theophrastus may have said about them. Diels turned a blind eye to this evidence, which *qua* status is entirely parallel to that of the seven Aristotelian references of his second category. Though he conceded that the Aristotelian school treatises were not entirely unknown between the dates of the demise of Theophrastus and Andronicus' purported edition, he remained convinced that easy access to *Physics, On Generation and Corruption, On the Soul, On the Senses*, and *On the Generation of Animals* (consulted, he submits, for the seven accurate abstracts) was only possible after Andronicus.

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13 Diels *ad. loc.* suspects and Runia 1996b: 373–374 = 2010: 324–325 argues that parts of 1.18.6 belong to AD. We may add that P's text of 1.18.6 fits the *diaphonia* of the chapter much better than S's.

14 Test. 10 Tarán.

15 Tarán 1975: 137n580 and Huffman 1993: 246 point out that the Aristotelian source may well be *On the Heavens* 2.13, 293b15–30.

16 Also found in Iamblichus, *Theological Principles of Arithmetic* p. 22.4–6 De Falco.

17 *DG* 217ff.

18 *DG* 222–224. This succeeds only to a limited extent, see e.g. the careful investigations of Ax 1986: 78–82, Baltussen 1993: 195–250, Long 1996, Baltussen 2000.

3 Companions

The hunt for fragments of the lost works of Aristotle has produced few results in the *Placita*; I would go so far as to say it has hardly produced any results at all. *Doxai* that to some extent are at variance with the doctrines of the school treatises can be paralleled, and thus explained, as later interpretations, or as handbook wisdom. Diels himself, discussing the part of 2.11.3, shared by both P and S, where we read that "Aristotle (says that the heaven consists) of a fifth body," of course knows that "fifth" rather than "first" (that is, primary, or most important) body is not part of Aristotelian parlance.[19] He cites four more lemmata where this "fifth body" is attributed, namely 1.3.22 (longer in S than in P), 1.7.32 (longer in P than in S) where it is claimed that Aristotle "called it fifth," 1.12.3 (P and S) and 2.7.5 (longer in P than in S).[20] Apart from the persistent presence of this "fifth" body there is nothing very remarkable about these lemmata, though 1.7.33 (longer in P than in S) perhaps deserves to be quoted:

> Aristotle [says that] the highest God is a separate form, mounted on the sphere of the universe, which is the ethereal body, also called by him "the fifth." This body is divided into spheres that are contiguous in reality but separated by reason. Each of these spheres he regards as a living being composed of body and soul. Of these the body is ethereal and moves in a circular fashion, whereas the soul is unmoved reason and cause of movement in actuality.

We may resist the temptation of attributing this presentation to one of the lost treatises, and see it for what it is, namely as an attempt to clarify and summarize the subtle and difficult doctrine of *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*).[21]

More evidence of subsequent attempts at interpretation and systematization is provided by *Sammelparagraphen* where "Aristotle" is combined with other name-labels: with "Pythagoras" (1.11.3, name-label "Aristotle"

19 "*Quinta essentia ab Aristotelis oratione abhorret*." The first certain instance of "fifth" plus "body" is [Plato], *Epinomis* 981 B-C; for Aristotle's own "first" see *On the Heavens* 1.3, 270b1–4 and *passim*; against its use in *On Philosophy*, see Hahm 1982.

20 He could have added 2.11.3 (the sentence share by P and S), 2.13.13 (in S alone), 2.20.11 (in P alone), 2.25.7 (in S alone), and esp. 2.30.6 (in S alone), where, just as at 1.3.22, it is claimed that Aristotle gave it this appellation. Attributed to Pythagoras at 2.6.2 (both P and S). See DG, *index verborum, s.v.* "πέμπτον σῶμα."

21 Cf. the parallels at 2.3.4 and 2.4.12 (both in both P and S), and AD fr. 9 Diels; more in Sharples 2002: 14–16.

only in P), with "Plato" (1.2.1 both P and S; 1.9.4/5 and 2.9.4 only in P), with "Pythagoras" "Plato" (2.10.1 both P and S; 2.23.6, 4.20.1, and 5.4.2 lemma in P only), with "Hippocrates" (5.18.4), with "Democritus" "Epicurus" (4.7.4, P and T), with "Plato," "Stoics," "*mathematikoi*" (2.29.6 name-label "Aristotle" not in S, who reads "Thales" "Anaxagoras"), with "Heraclides" (3.17.1 both P and S), with "Theophrastus" "Peripatetics" (1.pr., P only), with "Dicaearchus" (5.1.4, P only), with "Zeno" (5.5.2, P only), and with no less than ten others, from "Thales" to "Zeno" (2.1.2 in S and T, P only preserves "Thales"). These so to speak syncretistic lemmata deserve further study, which we intend to provide in the commentary in our forthcoming edition. Here I can discuss (briefly) only one case, namely the proem of the treatise, where Aristotle is mentioned together with others for a division of philosophy into two parts, which is different from the Stoic division into three:

> Aristotle and Theophrastus and almost all the Peripatetics divided philosophy as follows: the perfect person [i.e. the *sophos*] should both theorize about the things that are and perform the acts that must be done.[22]

This emphasis on philosophy as also a way of life is noteworthy. The division that is formulated does not constitute a theoretical distinction between formal parts of philosophy, but one between representative individuals, namely between the theoretical person (and philosopher) on the one hand and the practical person (and philosopher) on the other. The "perfect life" of the "good person" of *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.7, 1098a12–20, who lives according to several virtues (including those of the active life) but in the first place according to the highest theoretical virtue, has been simplified and reduced to the "perfect person." This perfect human being must be both; he must be able to theorize about the things that are as well as capable of performing the acts that should be done. The way of life of the "perfect person," or the best way of life, is the mixed life that combines *vita contemplativa* and *vita activa*.

In this way, the often-discussed difficulty of the relation between the active and the contemplative life according to Aristotle is neutralized, an issue symbolized by the purported *controversia* between Dicaearchus and Theophrastus briefly mentioned in Cicero, *Letters to Atticus* 2.16.3.[23] The Peripatetic

22 *Placita* 1, *Proemium* (citing only the first sentence): Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ καὶ Θεόφραστος καὶ σχεδὸν πάντες οἱ Περιπατητικοὶ διείλοντο τὴν φιλοσοφίαν οὕτως· ἀναγκαῖον τὸν τέλειον ἄνδρα καὶ θεωρητικὸν εἶναι τῶν ὄντων καὶ πρακτικὸν τῶν δεόντων.

23 Theophrastus, fr. 481 FHS&G; Dicaearchus, fr. 25 Wehrli = 33 Mirhady.

Doxography C in S[24] attributes a bipartition of virtue, theoretical and practical, to the Peripatetics, and Diogenes Laertius (5.28) attributes a bipartition of philosophy, theoretical and practical, to Aristotle himself. So what is in A to some extent agrees with such divisions, of which Diogenes' is later. That this view is attributed to "Aristotle, Theophrastus, and almost all the other Peripatetics" indeed shows that this is the later compromise of the mixed life, in which individual differences of doctrine have been ironed out. In Doxography C varieties of this compromise are described in some detail (though a little confusedly) as well.[25]

4 Abstracts

Lemmata that look like abstracts from the school treatises should be compared just as closely and precisely with the original Aristotelian text, as those identified as abstracts from Theophrastus' *On the Senses* have been compared with their source text.[26] Such a comparison would require much more space than I have here, so I can only give examples. These I select from Diels' list of seven lemmata.[27]

(1) 1.29.2–3 (the parts shared by P, S, and T) has been abstracted from two successive chapters belonging to the argument dealing with chance and the spontaneous in Aristotle's *Physics*. Diels refers to *Physics* 2.5, 197a5–10 and 2.6, 197a36, and could have added 2.6, 197b1–20, which however in his view may have seemed insufficiently close. It is at least clear that 1.29.2 Ἀριστοτέλης, *αἰτίαν κατὰ συμβεβηκός ἐν τοῖς καθ' ὁρμὴν ἕνεκά τινος* γιγνομένοις *ἄδηλον* καὶ *ἄστατον* ("Aristotle [says that chance is] an accidental cause that is unclear and unstable in the realm of what occurs according to an impulse toward some end") has been abstracted *verbatim* from *Physics* 2.5, 197a5–10 δῆλον ἄρα ὅτι ἡ τύχη *αἰτία κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ἐν τοῖς κατὰ προαίρεσιν τῶν ἕνεκάτου*. [. . .] ὅθεν καὶ ἡ τύχη τοῦ ἀορίστου εἶναι δοκεῖ καὶ *ἄδηλος* ἀνθρώπῳ ("so it is clear that chance is an accidental cause in the realm of what occurs according to a resolution pertaining to purpose. [. . .] Thus chance too is believed to belong with what is undetermined

24 S 2.13: 117.17–118.4 Wachsmuth. For this idea even in late antiquity see, e.g., David, *Prolegomena* 71.3–4, who comments on what "Aristotle says": "the perfect philosopher shall not only adorn himself with theory, but also take pride in action."

25 S 2.24: 143.24–145.10.4 Wachsmuth.

26 Cf. above, n. 18.

27 Cf. above, n. 11.

and unclear to man"). The substitution of *hormê* for *prohairesis* is interesting evidence of an attempt at updating.

(2) The definition at the beginning of 4.8.6 (in S alone), Ἀριστοτέλης *τὴν αἴσθησιν* ἑτεροίωσιν αἰσθητ‹ικ›οῦ καὶ *μεσότητα* ‹αἰσθητοῦ› ("Aristotle (says) that sensation is an alteration of the sensing (part of the soul), and a mean (between the extreme properties) of the sense-object"),[28] is close to *On the Soul* 2.11, 424a4–5 ὡς *τῆς αἰσθήσεως* οἷον *μεσότητός* τινος οὔσης τῆς ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς ἐναντιώσεως ("perception being a sort of mean of the opposition among the sense objects"), but *ad sententiam* rather than *ad verbum*. So is less close than Diels claimed.

(3) 4.9.3 (in S alone) Ἀριστοτέλης *τὴν αἴσθησιν μὴ πλανᾶσθαι περὶ τὸ ἴδιον*, περὶ δὲ τὸ συμβεβηκός ("Aristotle (says) that sensation does not err with regard to its proper object, but (it does err) with regard to what is incidental") has been abstracted from *On the Soul* 2.6, 418a11–12 λέγω δ' *ἴδιον* μὲν ὃ μὴ ἐνδέχεται ἑτέρᾳ αἰσθήσει αἰσθάνεσθαι, καὶ *περὶ ὃ μὴ ἐνδέχεται ἀπατηθῆναι* ("I call 'proper' what cannot be perceive by another sense organ, and with regard to which it is impossible to err"), but the wording has been modified.

(4) 1.9.1 (in both P and S). The unattributed (!) preliminary definition *ὕλη ἐστὶ τὸ ὑποκείμενον πάσῃ γενέσει καὶ φθορᾷ καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις μεταβολαῖς* ("matter is the substrate for all generation and destruction and the other (kinds of) changes") is very close to the proper Aristotelian definition of matter at *On Generation and Corruption* 1.4, 320a2–4 *ἐστὶ* δὲ *ὕλη* μάλιστα μὲν καὶ κυρίως *τὸ ὑποκείμενον γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς* δεκτικόν, τρόπον δέ τινα καὶ τὸ *ταῖς ἄλλαις μεταβολαῖς* ("matter in the chief and principal sense is what is the substrate of coming to be and is tolerant of passing away, in some sense also substrate of the other forms of change").

5 Tenets from the *pragmateiai*

The selection of *doxai* of others abstracted from the school treatises to be cited in this Section may as well begin with Diels' own and single example, 1.15.2 (in both P and S),[29] *οἱ Πυθαγορικοὶ χροιὰν' ἐκάλουν τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν* τοῦ σώματος ("the Pythagoreans called color the surface of the body"), italicizing what derives from Aristotle, *On the Senses* 3, 439a30–31 τὸ γὰρ χρῶμα ἢ ἐν τῷ πέρατί ἐστιν ἢ πέρας, διὸ καὶ *οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν 'χρόαν' ἐκάλουν* ("for color is either in

28 *Scripsimus* in the forthcoming edition, not in order to enhance the resemblance although this is what it does.

29 Cf. above, n. 16.

the limit. or the limit, which is of course why the Pythagoreans called color the surface of the body"). Word order slightly changed but derivation beyond doubt. We notice the exemplary doxographical economy: Aristotle's explanation in twelve words has been replaced by one in two: *tou sômatos*, attached to the word *epiphaneian* that has switched its position as compared with the original. Such economy is also present in the abstracts cited in Section 4 above.

There are several abstracts from the *Meteorology*.[30] This was already seen by Ideler (1834) in his wonderful commentary on this work. He pointed out that the meteorological lemmata in S that are paralleled in P (and/or similar sources) are most of the time dependent on Aristotle alone.[31] Diels (assuming he was aware of the commentary's existence) failed to profit from this insight and the evidence that supports it, or maybe preferred to ignore it because it conflicts with the Diels/Usener hypothesis regarding Theophrastus as the source of such parallel accounts.

Three lemmata of chapter 3.1, "On the circle of the Milky Way,"[32] namely 3.1.2 (some Pythagoreans, other Pythagoreans, some people) and 3.1.5–6 (Democritus plus Anaxagoras), all shared by P and S, derive straight from *Meteorology* 1.8 (inclusive of the name-labels "Pythagoreans," "Democritus," and "Anaxagoras"),[33] while 3.1.7 as to contents summarizes Aristotle's own doctrine from *Meteorology* 1.7–8, and so belongs with the instances cited in Section 4 above. Of the next chapter, 3.2, "On comets and shooting stars and streaks,"[34] the two lemmata 3.2.1–2 (in both P and S) derive straight from Aristotle's dialectical overview at *Meteorology* 1.6 (again inclusive of the name-labels "Pythagoreans," "Democritus," and "Anaxagoras"),[35] while 3.2.4 (only the first sentence shared by P and S) tersely summarizes Aristotle's own view at *Meteorology* 1.7.

These lemmata on the "Pythagoreans," prominent at the outset of chapters 3.1 and 3.2, could have been added by Diels to the evidence he posited for A's study of the school treatises, but this he failed to do, though in his apparatus

30 For more details than can be given here see Mansfeld 2005.

31 Ideler 1834–1836: 1.409 "*accedit, quod Stobaeus et reliqui, quibuscum ille* [sc. Stobaeus] *consentire solet, in enumeratione placitorum, fere unice ab Aristotele pendere soleant*." Neither Ideler nor Diels, of course, could be aware of the parallels in Theophrastus' *Metarsiologica*, now fully accessible in Daiber 1992.

32 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.3, 339a34–35 "on the phenomenon of the Milky Way."

33 3.1.2 ~ Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.8, 345a13–18; 3.1.5–6 ~ Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.8, 345a25–31.

34 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.8, 346b13 "on the comets," Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.1, 338b22–24 "on the comets and the fiery and moving apparitions."

35 3.2.1 ~ Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.6, 342b29–35 + 1.6, 342b35–343a21; 3.2.2 ~ Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.6, 342b27–29.

to 3.1.2 he refers to *Meteorology* 1.8, 346a19 for a minor textual issue. Of the long chapter 3.5, "On the Rainbow,"[36] the lemmata 3.5.3–9 (longer in P than S) are a series of quite faithful excerpts from *Meteorology* 3.2–5, as Ideler[37] and Diels already saw (though the optics, placed at the beginning: 5.3–6, have been updated). But the name-label "Aristotle" is conspicuously and surprisingly absent. Diels thought of a systematic meteorological handbook as intermediate source.[38] We note that 3.5.3 begins with a formula resembling a certain type of chapter heading (cf. those of chapters 2.19, 4.11, and seven others in Book 5): "How, now, is the rainbow formed?" This suggests that we are dealing with a problem and its possible solution(s).

Other chapters of A, Book 3, correspond to (pairs, or parts, of) individual chapters in the *Meteorology* thematically, and the chapter headings correspond to what we may call embedded headings in Aristotle (at the beginning or the end of a section, or at both). Chapter 3.3, "On thunders, lightnings, thunderbolts, fire winds, and *typhons*," corresponds with *Meteorology* 2.9;[39] chapter 3.4, "On clouds, mist, rains, dew, snow, hoar-frost, hail," corresponds with *Meteorology* 1.6–7;[40] Chapter 3.6, "On rods," corresponds with *Meteorology* 3.6;[41] ch. 3.7, "On winds," corresponds with *Meteorology* 2.4;[42] and 3.18, "On the halo" corresponds with *Meteorology* 3.3.[43] What is also noteworthy is the position of 3.18 "On the halo" (in P alone) at the end of the Book, after the chapters on the earth and sea, while its proper position would have been directly after chapter 3.5 on the rainbow, or at least before the explicit termination of

36 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 3.2, 371b18 "on halo and rainbow."

37 They have been rearranged: 3.5.3–9 ~ Aristotle, *Meteorology* 3.4, 372a32–34 + 3.2, 372a29–b1 + 3.4, 374a9–10 + 3.2, 372a32-b6 + 3.4, 373b17–24 + 3.4, 374b30–33 + 3.4, 374b1–5 3 + 3.4, 374a19–23. Ideler 1836: 1.268 writes: "*Excerpta ex capitibus II–V* [sc. of *Meteorology* Book 3] *reperiuntur apud Stobaeum Eclog. I, 31* [= chapter 1.30 Wachsmuth] . . ., *nullo tamen in iis exscribendis a scriptore certo ordine observato*."

38 *DG* 60–61, cf. ibid. 178.

39 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 2.9, 369a10–11 "on lightning and thunder, and then *typhon, prêstêr* and thunderbolts."

40 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 2.12, 349a9–10 "on rain and dew and snow and hoar frost and hail."

41 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 3.2, 371b19 "on mock suns and rods." The *anthêlious* (P's synonym) are in his text.

42 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 2.4, 359b27 "on winds."

43 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 3.2, 371b18–19 "on the halo and rainbow, what each of them is and through what cause they come to be."

the meteorological section at 3.8.2 (extant in P alone).[44] Aristotle discussed rainbow and halo, which in his view are optical phenomena, in *Meteorology* Book 3, while real meteorological phenomena are treated in Books 1 and 2. In the doxography the chapter on the rainbow was moved forward, but that on the halo remained in its original Aristotelian position at the end. The explicit closure at 3.8.2 is anyway odd, because chapter 3.15, "On earthquakes" (almost entirely in P alone, only 3.15.10 being extant in both sources), again corresponds with an individual chapter from the *Meteorology*, namely 2.7.[45] Such a correspondence is also true of chapter 3.16, "On the sea, how it came to be and how it is bitter," in relation to *Meteorology* 2.1.[46] Three lemmata of this chapter (in P only), moreover, have been abstracted from the beginning of this chapter of the *Meteorology*, namely 3.16.1 "Anaximander" from 2.1, 353b5–11, 3.16.3 "Empedocles" from 353b11–13, and 3.16.6 "Metrodorus" from 353b13–16. In Aristotle there are no name-labels; these appear this time to have been added by Theophrastus, but Empedocles is already identified at *Meteorology* 2.3, 357a24–26.[47]

The block of chapters on the earth, 3.9–14 (in P only),[48] to which I turn now, has so to speak been interpolated in the meteorology proper. Their Aristotelian precedent is not to be found in *Meteorology*, but in *On the Heavens*, Book 2, chapter 13. Questions Aristotle discusses in relation to each other have in a scholastic way been distributed over separate chapters in A. At *On the Heavens* 2.13, 293a15–17, Aristotle begins his account by listing three issues that have to be dealt with: "It remains to speak of the earth, (that is to say) where it is situated (cf. A 3.11), of the question whether it belongs to what is at rest or what is in motion (cf. A 3.13), and of its shape (cf. A 3.10)." In between he also speaks of the deviant Pythagorean theory according to which there is not a single earth

44 "Now I have described the things on high, the account will (next) inspect the terrestrial things." See Diels *DG* 60–61.

45 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 2.7, 365a14 "on earthquake and motion of the earth." Lemma 3.15.1, "Thales" and "Democritus," has been abstracted from *Meteorology* 2.7, 365b1–6 on Democritus, and 3.15.3, "Anaximenes," from *Meteorology* 2.7, 365b6–12.

46 Cf. Aristotle, *Meteorology* 2.1, 353a32–33 "on the sea, and what is its nature, and through what cause so great a mass of water is salt."

47 For the details (and a critical account of Theophrastus, *Physical Opinions* fr. 23 Usener/Diels = fr. 221 FHS&G, from Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Aristotle's Meteorology* 67.3–21), see Mansfeld 2013: 337–339. Diels *DG* 494 *ad loc*. already pointed out that Alexander's text mostly paraphrases Aristotle.

48 Debts to Aristotle discussed at some length in Mansfeld 1992: 94–110 = Mansfeld and Runia 2010: 75–94. For the position of the chapters on the earth, see Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Pt. 1.110–125.

but two, ours and a counter-earth (cf. the view of the Pythagorean Hicetas at 3.9.2—the *Placita* add a name-label), and of Xenophanes' theory—name-label in Aristotle—that the nether side of the earth stretches toward infinity (cited in 3.9.4). A striking peculiarity A shares with Aristotle is the characterization of the shape of the earth as that of a *tympanon*[49] or "kettle-drum" (*On the Heavens* 2.13, 293b34–294a1, τυμπανοειδής (*tumpanoeidês*) "shaped like a kettle-drum"), attributed in Aristotle's account to an anonymous philosopher, for whom the name-label "Leucippus" is added in 3.10.4, and whose earth is supplied with the same very rare epithet in the Aëtian chapter. In both Aristotle and A this word is a *hapax*. It is repeated in Simplicius' commentary on this passage. Apart from these three occurrences[50] there is only a single further one, which has escaped notice (including mine in former contributions), namely in the Leucippus section of Diogenes Laertius (9.30). In the majority of our editions of this author,[51] as well as in those of the fragments of the Atomists, we read that for Leucippus the "shape (*schêma*) of the earth" is *tympanôdes* (τυμπανῶδες). But the adjective *tympanôdês* is never connected with "form" or "shape" (*schêma*), but always with *êchos* (ἦχός), "sound," and means "sounding like a drum." The correct reading of the passage, with τυμπανοειδές, has been preserved in the early ms. Φ of Diogenes. Cobet, in his Didot edition of Diogenes, actually printed this word.[52] Some among the *deteriores* of Diogenes also have *tympanôdês*, presumably the learned conjecture of someone who knew Greek. Cobet either followed such a manuscript or made the conjecture himself, either way demonstrating his profound knowledge of Greek.

I add a few examples from the other books.[53] Lemmata 1.21.1–2 (in both P and S) of chapter 1.21, "On time,"[54] have been abstracted from a sentence in a chapter of the *Physics*.[55] Lemmata 5.7.1–2 (in P only) of chapter 5.7, "How males and females are engendered,"[56] cite first Empedocles and then, *more*

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49 Think of the tympanum in architecture and stand this triangular form on its head.

50 And two purely mathematical instances: Ptolemy, *On the Analemma* 210.20 and 212.18.

51 According to the reading of the three main manuscripts BPF, still followed by Dorandi 2013, who *per litteram* now agrees that we should read τυμπανοειδές (his edition was already in press, so could not be modified).

52 Cobet 1850: 234a46. The reading of the main manuscripts is the result of a majuscule mistake, since OEI is easily misread as Ω, as my friend Tiziano Dorandi, to whom I owe my information on the textual history of this passage, informs me.

53 For the Aristotelian antecedents of chapters 1.24 and 1.30 see Mansfeld 2002.

54 Cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 4.10, 218a31 "what is time and what is its nature" (for "what is its nature" cf. the heading of 1.22, "On the substance of time").

55 1.21.1–2 ~ Aristotle, *Physics* 4.10, 218a33–b1.

56 Cf. Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 4.3, 769a1 "through what cause do females and males come to be."

doxographico, in second place the opposite *doxa* of Parmenides. This association and the two *doxai* have been abstracted from a chapter of *On the Parts of Animals*, where however the chronological order was preserved and it was Empedocles who stood for the opposition.[57] Of the five lemmata in Book 5 that contain the name-label "Aristotle" alone three relate to passages from *On the Generation of Animals*.[58]

The contrast between corporeal and incorporeal soul at chapters 4.2 and 4.3 (more material in S and T than in P) derives from Aristotle, *On the Soul* Book 1 chapter 2.[59] Aristotle's dialectical account is also among the sources of several *doxai*. Two pairs of lemmata ultimately derive from this chapter, though in reversed order and with noteworthy modifications: the two lemmata 4.2.3 and 4.2.4, (a Middle Platonist) Pythagoras (in P and S)—Xenocrates (in S and T), derive from *On the Soul* 1.2, 404b16–30, where we have in sequence Plato—unidentified thinkers (i.e., Xenocrates). The two lemmata 4.2.1–2, Thales (P, S, and T)—Alcmaeon (in S and T), derive from *On the Soul* 1.2, 405a19–21 plus 1.2, 405a29–b1, also Thales followed by Alcmaeon; at a first glance it is not clear whether Aristotle here presents Thales and Alcmaeon as corporealists or incorporealists (no mention of water for Thales, and no material principle at all for Alcmaeon), so a doxographer could prefer the latter, though elsewhere of course Aristotle always presents Thales as a corporealist. The issue of the soul's partition (chapter 4.4) is already stated in this chapter of the treatise *On the Soul* as well.[60] For the methodology in these chapters see the next Section.

6 Aristotelian Methodology

We may conclude with the Aristotelian methodology that informs the treatise.[61] The discussion of themes in an order determined by the Aristotelian

57 5.7.1–2 ~ Aristotle, *On the Parts of Animals* 2.2, 648a25–31.

58 5.3.1 relates to Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 4.1, 766b12, 5.6.1 to Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 1.19, 727b12–18 and 2.4, 739a26, 5.17.2 to Aristotle, *On the Generation of Animals* 2.1, 735a15 (cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 5.1, 1013a4); 5.25.1 relates to Aristotle, *On Sleep and Waking* 1, 454a8–11; 3, 456b17–29, and *On Youth and Old Age* 4, 469b13–20, and 5.26.2 (the only of these lemmata to be extant in both P and S) to Aristotle, *On the Soul* 2.2, 413a21–b10.

59 It is announced at Aristotle, *On the Soul* 1.2, 404b30–405a1.

60 Aristotle, *On the Soul* 1.2, 402b1. For Aristotelian antecedents as to contents and methodology of A's chapters on the soul see further Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Pt. 1.139–144.

61 This methodology also influenced numerous other authors. Discussed at length in earlier contributions; see Mansfeld 1990: 3193–3208, Mansfeld 1992: 70–76, 92–94 = Mansfeld and

categories of substance, quality, quantity, place etc., which is an important feature of the Aristotelian school treatises, is also a feature of large sections and even individual chapters of the *Placita*.[62] The methodology of scientific enquiry formulated in the first chapter of Book 2 of *Posterior Analytics*, that is, the four types of questions *to hoti* "how is it?" (quality or attribute), *to dihoti* "why is it?" (cause or explanation), *ei esti* "does it exist?" (existence), and *ti esti* "what is it?" (definition), the first and fourth of which coincide with Aristotelian categories, is another determining factor.[63]

I cite a few examples. In *Physics* 4 Aristotle discusses place (*topos*). As regards place, he begins, the natural philosopher should know "whether it exists or not, and what kind of existence it has, and what it is."[64] We may compare A chapter 1.7, "Who is the god." In its first section this chapter, lacking in S, describes the views of those who deny that God exists. Its second part (more material in S than in P) is a list of views concerned with definitions of God on a gliding scale attributed to a sequence of individual philosophers. These different approaches correspond to the types of question dealing with the issues "is it?" and "what is it?" Aristotle, in his seminal account of the four scientific question-types in the chapter referred to above, uses precisely these issues as examples: "we inquire whether the centaur or the god exists or does not exist. [...] and when we know that he exists, we enquire what he is, e.g., what is God [...]."[65]

Runia 2010: 41–49, 72–75, and Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Pt. 1.10–13, 1.158–180. On *diaeresis* also Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Pt. 2, *passim*. See now Mansfeld 2015, from which part of what follows has been taken over.

62 E.g., 2.11–12 on the heaven, 2.13–17 on the stars: in succession substance, shape (quality), arrangement (place), motion (action), lighting (being-affected); 2.20–24 on the sun, 2.25–30 on the moon, 4.8–21 on sensation and the senses, and 5.3–14 on semen and insemination, all beginning with a chapter dealing with the category of substance (*ousia*).

63 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 2.1, 89b24–35. Some examples in the *Placita* (cf. in several cases the chapter headings): question of existence at 1.7 and 1.24, of definition at 1.1 and 2.13, of quality or attribute at 2.3 and 4.7, of cause or explanation at 2.8, 3.17, and 5.9. The late Platonists Elias and David (deriving this order from Olympiodorus) put the question of existence first, see for instance David, *Prolegomena* 1.13–15, and see Altmann and Stern 1958: 8–19 on "the four types of inquiry." But so already do, e.g., Cicero, *Topics* 81–82, and Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 8.6.17.2–3. Cf. Galen, *On the Function of Parts* [*UP*] III 496.3–4 K, and *On Hippocrates' Epidemics* VI, XVIIA 810.10–13 K, referring to Aristotle, places the "what it is" before the "why it is."

64 Aristotle, *Physics* 4.1, 208a27–29. On Aristotle's dialectical discussion of "place" see Algra 1995: 121–191.

65 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* 2.1, 89b31–35.

As to the categories we may look again at some of A's chapters dealing with the earth. The first, chapter 3.9, has the heading "On the earth, and what is its substance and how many there are" in P (note that Diels only prints "On the earth") and "On earth, whether it is one and finite and how large" in the chapter index of S. The next, chapter 3, has the heading "On earth's shape"; chapter 3.11 has "On earth's position," chapter 3.12 "On earth's inclination," and chapter 3.13 "On earth's movement." Without difficulty we distinguish, in succession, the categories of substance, quantity, quality, place, being-in-a-position, doing, and being-affected. In chapter 3.9 (as extant) substance is not included, perhaps because the substance of earth is, well, earth.

At the beginning of Aristotle's inquiry into the soul, we read "the aim of our inquiry is to study and understand its (sc. the soul's) nature and substance, and secondly its accidents," and that we have find out whether it is a substance, a quality, or a quantity, and whether or not it has parts.[66] Chapters 2 to 7 of Book 4 of the *Placita*—more material in S and T than in P for 4.2–3, equal amount for 4.6–7, while S, apart from 4.5.11–12 which are only in S but in reality derive from a separate chapter in A, is lacking for P 4.4–5—form a series dealing with the soul *per se* in a close-knit and ordered sequence according to question-types and categories, all of which are ultimately derived from Aristotle. Chapters 4.2–3, "On the Soul" and "Whether the soul is a body and what is its substance," are concerned with the question-type of definition and the category of substance, but also with that of quantity because of the distinction between monists and pluralists, an important and explicitly described ingredient already of *On the Soul* 1.2. The distinction as to substance between incorporealists (chapter 4.2) and corporealists (chapter 4.3) is fundamental in Aristotle too.[67] Chapter 4.4, "On the parts of soul," is about the category of quantity, and *ad finem* includes that of place. Chapter 4.5, "What is the regent part of the soul and in what place is it," is about the categories of substance and, above all, place. Chapter 4.6, "On the motion of soul," is about the categories of action and being-affected, and chapter 4.7, "On the indestructibility of soul," about the category of time.

What is common knowledge is hardly ever formulated explicitly, so this scholastic use of categories and question types is rarely mentioned *disertis verbis* in our ancient sources. But there are exceptions, for instance passages (not cited in earlier contributions) in Galen, who fortunately is never adverse to state the obvious.[68] Galen was the author of a lost commentary in four

66 Aristotle, *On the Soul* 1.1, 402a5–7, 402a22–402b3.

67 Aristotle, *On the Soul* 1.2, 404b30–405a2; this *diaeresis* is amply illustrated in Aristotle's chapter.

68 Other evidence cited at Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Pt. 1.12–13.

books on the first part of Aristotle's *Categories*.[69] Here and there in his vast oeuvre one may find remarks such as "that in inquiring into questions such as these one has to be trained in distinguishing the categories is in my view evident."[70] This view is copiously illustrated in his extant *Introduction to Logic* [*Institutio logica*]. In chapter 2 of this work we have a list of propositions pertaining to questions of yes or no in all the Aristotelian categories, some of which coincide with issues treated in the *Placita*. Galen here follows *Posterior Analytics* 1.22, where the terms of categorical statements are arranged according to categories, as the subject is said according to the first category and the differentia to one of the others.[71] Interesting is also Galen's distinction between "existence" *simpliciter* (*hyparxis haplê*)—which may also be identified as the question type of existence—and "substance" (*ousia*) in the sense of material substance;[72] the latter is paralleled in numerous chapters of the *Placita*, the former in several. In three chapters of his treatise Aristotelian categories and question types are explicitly linked with particular issues, most of which, we note, coincide with issues in various chapters of A. We may for instance mention, in *Introduction to Logic* 12.3, the size (cf. A 2.21) and distances (cf. A 2.31) of the sun—categories of quantity and place—, in 13.7–8 the position (cf. A 3.11) and shape (cf. A 3.10) of the earth—categories of place and quality—, in 13.9 causes of voice (cf. A 4.19), respiration (cf. A 4.22), earthquakes (cf. A 3.15), and various kinds of thunderstorms (cf. A 3.3)—question type of cause—, and in chapter 14 the question type of existence again, and the category of substance. This "first and most important" type of "problem," namely "that in relation to existence or substance," is illustrated by the questions "does fate exist" (cf. A 1.27–28), "does providence" (cf. A 2.3), "do the gods exist" (cf. A 1.7), and "does the void exist" (cf. A 1.18).

The dialectical presentation of a multiplicity of *doxai* that are concerned with a specific issue in physics, most of the time equipped with name-labels, is a standard feature of Aristotle's enquiries, though a preparatory feature, and such pluralities of doctrines also constitute the contents of the majority of *Placita* chapters. Similar presentations, to be sure, are also found occasionally

69 Galen, *My Own Books* XIX 47.7–8 K.

70 Galen, *On the Differences of Pulses* [*De puls. differ.*] VIII 622.3–5 K: ὅτι δ' ἐν τῷ περὶ τῶν τοιούτων σκοπεῖσθαι γεγυμνάσθαι χρὴ διαγινώσκειν τὰς κατηγορίας, ἡγοῦμαι πρόδηλον ὑπάρχειν.

71 Mau 1960: 33.

72 Galen, *Introduction to Logic* [*Inst. Log.*] 2.1–2, where also examples from physics are given for issues concerned with substance, size (i.e. quantity), possession, quality, the relative, action, and being-affected.

in Plato and even before Plato,[73] but Aristotle used them in a substantially revised and very systematic way, and on a large scale. An important structuring technique is that of the division of views into series of contrasting pairs, or the mapping of a variety of views on a gliding scale.[74] This technique, too, is found before Aristotle too, but it was modified, refined and systematized to a degree by the indefatigable genius from Stagira.

The method of selecting material suitable for systematic dialectical discussion is described and recommended by Aristotle in a fundamental passage in the *Topics*:[75]

> Propositions should be selected in as many ways as we drew distinctions in regard to the proposition. Thus one may select the *doxai* held by all or by the majority or by the experts. [...] We should also make selections from the available literature and put these in separate lists (*diagraphas*) concerned with every genus, putting them down under separate headings (*hypotithentes chôris*), for instance about the (genus of the) good, or about the (genus of the) living being—and that is to say about the good as a whole, beginning with the: "what is it?" One should indicate separately the *doxai* of individuals, e.g., that Empedocles said that the elements of bodies are four.[76] [...] Of propositions and problems there are, roughly speaking, three sorts: for some are ethical propositions, others physical, and others logical. [...] Physical are such as, e.g., whether the cosmos is eternal or not.[77]

The literature that is available has to be studied, and the material to be used must be abstracted, formulated briefly, and distributed over a grid consisting of the parts and subparts of the various philosophical disciplines with their (sub-)divisions. As we have seen in Sections 4 and 5 above, Aristotle himself, too, was subsequently subjected to the practice he so influentially preached. Obviously, it is more convenient to use existing collections than to compile collections of one's own. I believe that we may assume that the majority of the lemmata in the *Placita* concerned with Aristotle's own doctrines were abstracted and collected at about the same time as those dealing with the views of others that were derived from the school writings. *Pace* Diels I fail

73 See Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Pt. 1.154–158, with references to earlier contributions.

74 For the *Placita* see, again, Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Pt. 2.2: *passim*.

75 Aristotle, *Topics* 1.14, 105a34–37 plus 105b12–25.

76 Cf. 1.3.20.

77 Cf. 1.4.

to see why this work could not have begun by one or more members of the Peripatetic community in the last decades of the fourth to the early decades of the third centuries BC.

7 A *texte vivant*

There are also groups of chapters and individual chapters of the *Placita*, where the impact of Aristotle's methodology and inquiries is much less strong, or not found at all. The Hellenistic philosophers had their own agendas, and devoted much space, time, and energy to issues that are not found, or at the very least are less prominent, in Aristotle. The *Placita* is what one may call a *texte vivant*, that is, it belongs with the kind of literature that serves a practical purpose, and in the course of its career both loses material and acquires new material (think, for instance, of modern dictionaries, or ancient collections of *problêmata*)—until, like the *Problêmata* of the *corpus Aristotelicum*, such a collection starts to freeze up. A good example of an area where Aristotle's influence is absent is provided by the block of four chapters near the end of Book 1 dealing with necessity and fate: 1.25, "On necessity," 1.26, "On the substance (*ousia*) of necessity," 1.27, "On fate," and 1.28, "On the substance of fate" (in both P and S, but not all lemmata are represented twice). Another case of updating is constituted by the three chapters on Stoic epistemology, 4.11–12 and 4.21 (in P only), condemned by Diels as Aëtian additions to the early stock of *placita*, that is, as evidence of decadence. But the presence of post-Aristotelian philosophy in the *Placita*, however interesting and important, is not part of the subject of the present paper."[78, 79]

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78 Dealt with in Mansfeld and Runia 2009: Vol. 2.1.

79 * Thanks are due as always to David Runia for his prompt and helpful comments.

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PART 3

Aristotle in Late Antiquity

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CHAPTER 16

Porphyry and the Aristotelian Tradition

Riccardo Chiaradonna

1 Porphyry and Aristotle's *Categories*

Porphyry (*ca.* 234–305) was a Platonist philosopher and polymath; he was Plotinus' favorite student and the editor of the *Enneads*. Porphyry was also an anti-Christian polemicist and, according to some scholars, he was a pagan ideologue to the extent that he possibly inspired Diocletian's Great Persecution (AD 303). In addition to that, Porphyry was a commentator on Aristotle's treatises.[1] The present chapter aims to answer the following two questions: What is Porphyry's contribution to the reception of Aristotle in antiquity? How does Porphyry's engagement with Aristotle fit into his overall work?

Porphyry was not the first Platonist who was interested in Aristotle. Before Plotinus, Platonists were familiar with some of Aristotle's school treatises, especially the *Categories* and the *On the Heavens*. The evidence is meager, but it is likely that Platonists from 100 BC to AD 200 were also acquainted with Aristotle's exoteric works, whose circulation continued well after the renaissance of interest in Aristotle's treatises in the first century BC.[2] Plotinus certainly had an extensive knowledge of Aristotle, which included both Aristotle's school treatises and the Peripatetic commentaries on them (see Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus* 14.4–6; 14.12–14). Scholars sometimes draw on Karl Praechter's distinction between two main trends in pre-Plotinian Platonism (what Praechter called "Middle Platonism").[3] On the one side, philosophers such as Alcinous were favorable to Aristotle and aimed to incorporate his views into their reading of Plato. On the other side, philosophers like Taurus, Atticus, and

* A first draft of this chapter was presented in May 2014 at a seminar on Porphyry organized by Anna Marmodoro at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. I would like to thank all the participants for their comments and critical remarks. Thanks are also due to Andrea Falcon and George Karamanolis, who were kind enough to read this chapter in advance, for their very helpful suggestions. All mistakes are my own.

1 For a general outline of Porphyry's biography and work, see the entry "Porphyre de Tyr" in Goulet 2012: 1289–1468 (prepared by several authors). Collection of fragments in Smith 1993.

2 Chiaradonna 2011.

3 Praechter 1922.

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Nicostratus reacted against this trend and attacked both Aristotle and his supporters. While Plotinus was the last anti-Aristotelian Platonist, Porphyry took over the Aristotelizing approach: after Porphyry, Neoplatonists widely shared his view about the harmony between Plato and Aristotle. As I aim to show, this picture is not false but is somewhat too simple.

In order to shed some light on Porphyry's distinctive contribution to the ancient reception of Aristotle, I will focus on his exegetical work on the *Categories*. Porphyry attached great importance to this treatise, which he regarded as an introduction not just to logic but to the whole of philosophy (*On Aristotle's Categories* 56.28–29).[4] This stance explains, at least in part, Porphyry's intensive work on the *Categories*. He composed a short commentary in a question-and-answer format on this treatise, which is the only extant commentary on Aristotle by Porphyry. He also wrote an extensive commentary in seven books dedicated to someone called Gedalius, which is now lost.[5] In addition to these two commentaries, Porphyry wrote an introduction to logic, the *Isagoge*, where he explains what genus (γένος), *differentia* (διαφορά), species (εἶδος), proper (ἴδιον), and accident (συμβεβηκός) are. The *Isagoge* is so closely connected with the *Categories* that some interpreters have regarded Porphyry's short treatise as an introduction to *Categories* rather than an introduction to logic as a whole.[6]

The importance that Porphyry attached to the *Categories* was certainly connected with the role that this treatise played in the reception of Aristotle. Aristotle's *Categories* was the star treatise, so to speak, of the ancient commentary tradition. This fact depended, at least in part, on Andronicus' arrangement of the Aristotelian corpus: Andronicus placed the *Organon* first among the Aristotelian writings because he took the study of logic to be a prerequisite for the rest of philosophy. Moreover, he placed the *Categories* first in the *Organon* because this treatise focuses on single terms. It is likely that those who wanted to study Aristotle, even only to refute his views, started with the *Categories*—they started with it and, more often than not, stopped at it,

4 References to Porphyry's *Isagoge* and to his commentary on Aristotle's *Categories* follow the pagination of Busse 1887. A new edition of Porphyry's commentary on the *Categories* is offered in Bodéüs 2008. English translation in Strange 1992. Menn (forthcoming) interestingly suggests that Gedalius was a Jewish contemporary of Porphyry.

5 Through Simplicius we have a few fragments of Porphyry's *To Gedalius*: see Smith 1993: 35–59 (45T.–?74F. Smith). Furthermore, the so-called Archimedes Palimpsest contains a section from a commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*, which is probably to be identified with Porphyry's *To Gedalius*. Cf. Chiaradonna, Rashed, and Sedley 2013 (more on this below).

6 On this debate, see de Libera and Segonds 1998, and Barnes 2003. On the posterity of the *Isagoge*, see Erismann 2011.

for the other treatises were difficult and long enough to discourage further engagement.[7] This is probably not the whole story, and there possibly were further, more philosophical, reasons to explain why the *Categories* played such a crucial role in the reception of Aristotle from the first century BC onward.[8] Be that as it may, both Aristotelian commentators and philosophers from other schools engaged critically with the treatise. Simplicius (*On Aristotle's Categories* 159.32) draws a list of ancient exegetes of the *Categories*, which provides something like a map of school debates during the first century BC. It includes three Peripatetics (Andronicus of Rhodes, Boethus of Sidon, and Aristo of Alexandria), one Academic philosopher (Eudorus of Alexandria) and one Stoic (Athenodorus). One century later, Plutarch possibly wrote a work on the *Categories* (see Lamprias catalogue no. 192) and in the second century AD the Platonist Atticus and Nicostratus raised a number of objections against Aristotle's theory.[9] Finally, Plotinus, Porphyry's master, developed an extensive critical discussion of Aristotle's categories in his treatise *On the Genera of Being* (6.1–3).

Yet even when it is considered against this tradition, Porphyry's engagement with this treatise remains impressive and unprecedented. To the best of our knowledge, Porphyry was the first Platonist who wrote commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories* (and on Aristotle *tout court*). Opponents of Aristotle such as Atticus or Nicostratus wrote polemical monographs or collections of *aporiai*. Plotinus incorporated this genre (and certainly some of Nicostratus' objections) into the polemical sections of his treatise *On the Genera of Being* (6.1). Aristotelizing Platonists, in turn, either composed paraphrases of Aristotle (such as those of the apocryphal Pythagorean treatises which scholars connect to the circle of Eudorus of Alexandria) or, mostly tacitly, appropriated Aristotle's views and attributed them to Plato (as in Alcinous' section on logic).[10] It is very interesting that Simplicius' list of exegetes does not include any Platonist commentators from before Porphyry.[11] In a recent work, George Karamanolis has emphasized these facts and proposed an explanation that can be taken as a starting point for further discussion. Karamanolis suggests that writing running commentaries that cover an entire work entails two features:

7 Sharples 2008.

8 Chiaradonna 2013: 45–46. On the whole issue, see now Griffin 2015.

9 Fragments collected in Gioè 2002: 157–219.

10 See Alcinous, *Handbook of Platonism* [*Didaskalikos*] 6.158.8; 158.39–40 (syllogisms); 158.39 (study of sophistical arguments); 159.43 (the categories). See Moraux 1984: 432–433; 453–458; Zambon 2002: 326–327; Karamanolis 2006: 28–36.

11 See Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 1.18–2.5.

(1) acceptance of the authority of the text; (2) connection with teaching.[12] If Porphyry was the first Platonist to write commentaries on Aristotle, the reason is that his critical engagement with Aristotle was different from that of his predecessors. Porphyry, like the pre-Plotinian Aristotelizing Platonists, construed some Aristotelian doctrines in such a way that they turned out to be compatible with those of Plato. In addition, Porphyry held the view that Aristotle investigated areas not systematically explored by Plato. Hence, Aristotle's works contain theories that should be credited to Aristotle and not to Plato, and "these works cannot be appreciated without reading them closely and understanding them correctly."[13]

Karamanolis' general conclusions are persuasive, but it may be possible to shed further light on Porphyry's project. In his extant commentary on the *Categories*, Porphyry relies on a number of *auctoritates*. He mentions Andronicus of Rhodes, Boethus of Sidon, and Herminus (*On Aristotle's Categories* 59.17–20; 125.21–22).[14] He does not mention Alexander of Aphrodisias, but a number of parallels show that he made use of Alexander's exegesis—and possibly simply incorporated parts of Alexander's commentary—without mentioning his source (more on this below). Interestingly enough, no Platonist figures among his *auctoritates*. The same situation emerges from the *Isagoge*. There Porphyry says that he is going to set down what "the old masters, and especially the Peripatetics among them" (*Isagoge* 1.14–16, trans. Barnes) have said on the subject. Indeed the *Isagoge* shows some Platonic or Platonizing features (more on this below), but there is no reference to previous Platonist readings of Aristotle's logic. It is possible that "old masters" includes a reference to Platonist philosophers, but it is significant that Porphyry explicitly mentions the Peripatetic masters and not the Platonists.[15] Porphyry's works on the *Categories* make only few references to Platonist philosophers, and these are invariably critical. For example, in his short commentary, Porphyry mentions Atticus when he rejects his view on homonymies (*On Aristotle's Categories* 66.34–67.2). Evidence from the lost *To Gedalius* shows that Porphyry rebutted

12 Karamanolis 2004: 101.

13 Karamanolis 2004: 104.

14 See Bodéüs 2008: 28–32. In addition to these Aristotelian commentators, Porphyry mentions the Stoics Athenodorus and Cornutus (*On Aristotle's Categories* 59.10; 86.22–24), as well as the Platonist Atticus (*On Aristotle's Categories* 66.34 = Atticus, fr. 42a des Places), whose interpretations he rejects as mistaken.

15 According to Ammonius (*On Porphyry's Isagoge* 22.14–22), Porphyry put together the *Isagoge* "from what Plato and Taurus had said," but scholars doubt the reliability of Ammonius (and the text is uncertain). See Gioè 2002: 283–284 (Taurus 35T.) and 375–376; Barnes 2003: 23–24.

Lucius' and Nicostratus' objections (*apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 21.2–21 = Porphyry 50F. Smith; 29.24–30.15 = Porphyry 51F. Smith; 30.16–31.21 = Porphyry 52F. Smith; 48.1–33 = Porphyry 55F. Smith; 414.26–415.9 = Porphyry ?74F. Smith).[16] In those sections, Porphyry was probably incorporating and expanding on earlier Peripatetic arguments against such Platonist opponents of Aristotle.

As we shall see below, this does not mean that Porphyry's commentaries on Aristotle do not allude to Platonic views. Neither does it mean that Porphyry's reading of Aristotle is limited to logic, while ontology is investigated in purely Platonic terms. This is simply false, as Aristotle's philosophy is actually present in the whole of Porphyry's work, and Porphyry does not regard logic as separate from ontology and independent of it. But certainly Porphyry's approach to Aristotle seems like a new beginning, very different from pre-Plotinian Platonism. While the pre-Plotinian engagement with Aristotle resulted in collections of *aporiai* or in the appropriation of Aristotle's views for Plato, Porphyry attempted the integration of those views into a broader philosophical framework.[17]

2 Logic and Sensible Beings

Some scholars have argued that Porphyry aimed to separate logic from metaphysics and discussed the former as a metaphysically (or even philosophically) neutral subject. By their lights, Porphyry could be Aristotelian in logic while being Platonic in metaphysics.[18] This conclusion is not persuasive: ontology is far from absent from Porphyry's logical works.[19] Still, what we find in Porphyry's works on the categories is not a fully developed Platonic ontology; rather, it is a simplified and partial ontology, limited to perceptible beings. This is consistent with what we are told in *On Aristotle's Categories* 56.29–31, where Porphyry argues that the *Categories* are especially introductory to the physical

16 The recently discovered commentary in the Archimedes Palimpsest gives further evidence on Porphyry's replies to Nicostratus: see Porphyry[?], *On Aristotle's Categories* 1.26–3.16 (Chiaradonna, Rashed, Sedley 2013: 140–145; 171–173).

17 For a different account, see Helmig 2012: 172–175.

18 Ebbesen 1990 and Barnes 2003, who support this view with different emphases: according to Ebbesen, Porphyry's logic is Peripatetic and independent of his Platonism; according to Barnes, Porphyry's logic is philosophically neutral and compatible with different (and even alternative) philosophical assumptions.

19 More details in Chiaradonna 2008.

part of philosophy "for substance, qualification, and so forth are the product of nature" (trans. Strange).

In his exegesis of the *Categories*, Porphyry starts from the traditional problem of how to determine the purpose (πρόθεσις) of the treatise (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 58.4–20; *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 10.20–11.22 = Porphyry 46F. Smith; 11.23–29 = Porphyry 47F. Smith; 13.11–18 = Porphyry 48F. Smith).[20] His solution is based on the earlier Peripatetic tradition and particularly on Boethus of Sidon: categories are simple significant words that are investigated *qua* significant of things as differing in genus. In short, the *Categories* is a work on semantics that investigates words that mean things. This specification is not redundant, for Porphyry distinguishes two kinds of words by distinguishing two impositions or uses of names. On a first approach, human beings impose names to indicate or signify things. On a second approach, they use names to indicate other names. Instances of first imposition names are "man," "dog," "sun," "black," "white," "magnitude" (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 57.25–27); instances of second imposition names are "noun" (ὄνομα) and "verb" (ῥῆμα) (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 57.30–35). The *Categories* focuses on first imposition names but not on all of them; it deals with the most general first imposition names that signify the most basic and general *differentiae* in things, i.e. the categories (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 58.3–15). This solution becomes standard after Porphyry, and Porphyry himself distinguishes it from two rival interpretations: on one side, that which sees the *Categories* as dealing with words *qua* words (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 59.10–14), and on the other side, that which sees the *Categories* as dealing with beings *qua* beings (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 59.5–6: περὶ τῶν γενῶν τῶν ὄντων). Porphyry quotes a long passage from Herminus where this latter view is refuted (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 59.20–33).[21] The ontological reading of the *Categories* was evidently an ancient one, and it was significantly also Plotinus' view. Therefore, Porphyry's section on the subject matter of the *Categories* is an implicit reply to his master.

Porphyry's semantics raises some intriguing problems that are not relevant to the present discussion. Here I will simply outline how Porphyry's account of the subject matter of the *Categories* allows him to integrate Aristotle's doctrines into his philosophy. The most interesting example is that of primary substance. For a Platonist, Aristotle's view that sensible particulars are primary substances raised an obvious predicament. Before Porphyry, Nicostratus and

20 On this, see Griffin 2012.

21 On this passage, see Bodéüs 2008: 101–103, with the notes *ad loc.*, and the very interesting discussion in Griffin 2015.

Plotinus had criticized Aristotle's division of the categories for neglecting intelligible beings (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 73.15–28 = Lucius 5T. Gioè; 76.13–17 = Nicostratus 13T. Gioè; Plotinus 6.1.1.15–30). Alexander, possibly replying to Nicostratus, suggested that Aristotle's account of primary substance in the *Categories* can actually apply to separate forms (i.e. to the unmoved movers) too (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 82.6–7; 90.31–33). Porphyry's solution is different, and is based on his view about the subject matter of the *Categories*. As noted earlier, he claims that categories are words that signify things and human language primarily refers to perceptible beings (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 91.7–12 and 91.19–25). Furthermore, words are "messengers of things" and derive their basic mutual differences from things (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 58.23–29). Hence, for Porphyry, the division of categories reflects the basic ontic distinctions of (sensible) things. Sensible particulars are the primary object of our language. This explains why Aristotle regards them as primary substances, even if Aristotle himself elsewhere takes intelligible substances as primary (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 91.14–17). Sensible particulars are primary substances *quoad nos* and not in themselves (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 91.19–27).

We know that in his lost *To Gedalius* Porphyry focused more narrowly on sensible beings and on their ontic structure. For example, Porphyry rejected Boethus of Sidon's view that only matter and composites of matter and form are substances, whereas hylomorphic forms fall outside substance (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 78.4–79.5 = Porphyry, 58F. Smith). Unfortunately, it is not very easy to reconstruct Porphyry's argument, since Simplicius apparently blurs Porphyry's reply with his own expansion on it. The least we can say is that Porphyry aimed to show that Aristotle's account of substance in the *Categories* is perfectly compatible with the substantial status that Aristotle grants to hylomorphic forms elsewhere. This approach is similar to that of Alexander of Aphrodisias, who repeatedly argues (probably against Boethus of Sidon) that the essential form does not inhere in body in the same way as an accident inheres in its substantial subject (*Questions* 1.8.17; 17–22; 1.17.30.9–16; 1.26.42.24–25; *Mantissa* 122.4–12).[22] In a similar vein, Porphyry replies to an *aporia* of Lucius and vindicates the distinction between constituent properties of bodies and mere qualities (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 48.1–33 = Porphyry 55F. Smith).[23] Porphyry makes use of an argument well attested in Alexander according to which "parts of substances" (such as *differentiae*, genera, and species) are substances too and must not be seen as qualities inhering

22 On Alexander's criticism of Boethus, see Rashed 2007.

23 On this passage, see de Haas 1997: 207–210.

in independent substantial subjects (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 48.22–26 = Porphyry, 55F. Smith; Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 94.17–27).[24] Porphyry also takes over one of Alexander's most characteristic theories, that universals are accidents of definable natures. We can find this theory both in Porphyry's short commentary (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 81.3–22) and in the section from Porphyry's *To Gedalius* preserved in the Archimedes Palimpsest (Porphyry[?], *On Aristotle's Categories* 3.1–16). Furthermore, Porphyry mentions this theory in reply to an *aporia* concerning the so-called *fallacia accidentis*, according to which "Socrates is a Man; Man is a Species; therefore, Socrates is a Species." This is also the context in which the theory is mentioned in Alexander's lost commentary on the *Categories*.[25] It is striking that Porphyry mentions Alexander neither in his short commentary nor in what we have from the lost *To Gedalius*. This, however, is somewhat in line with the parsimonious use of overt quotations from recent authors in late antiquity. It is likely that in his *To Gedalius* Porphyry incorporated Alexander's exegesis and named the commentators whom Alexander himself cited. Since, as Simplicius says, in his *To Gedalius* Porphyry composed "a complete explanation of the book, containing the resolution of all objections" (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 2.6–7, trans. Chase), it is also possible that Porphyry expanded on Alexander and provided detailed discussions of alternative views.

This brief overview shows that in his reading of the *Categories* Porphyry aimed not to remove ontology from the picture but rather to supply a precise ontology: the Peripatetic hylomorphic ontology in the essentialist version developed by Alexander of Aphrodisias. As emerges from his classification of intelligible and incorporeal beings (*Sentences* 19 and 42, and *On Ptolemy's Harmonics* 17.13–17; 27–29), Porphyry's metaphysics is bipartite: he posits the existence not only of bodies and incorporeal beings immanent in them such as the hylomorphic forms, but also of self-subsistent intelligible and incorporeal beings. Aristotle's categories deal with the lower part of Porphyry's metaphysical world.[26] This, however, does not mean that Porphyry relegates Aristotle's

24 On this argument in Alexander, see Rashed 2007: 42–52.

25 See Chiaradonna, Rashed, and Sedley 2013: 144–145; 172–173. Alexander's argument is found in an Armenian fragment of his lost commentary on the *Categories*: see Schmidt 1966.

26 This point is well made in Sorabji 2004: 31 [1(a)]: "The distinction of categories might well be classified nowadays as a piece of metaphysics, but if so, Porphyry's insistence remains important, that the discussion concerns only the metaphysics of the *sensible* world" (italics in the original).

philosophy to the sensible world, while leaving intelligible and true beings to Plato.

3 The Integration of Aristotle's Philosophy into Platonism

Porphyry is known to have composed two works comparing Aristotle's philosophy to that of Plato: one on their harmony (Περὶ τοῦ μίαν εἶναι τὴν Πλάτωνος καὶ Ἀριστοτέλους αἵρεσιν ζ': cf. *Suda, s.v.* "Porphyry," π 2098 Adler = Porphyry 239T. Smith) and one on their differences (Περὶ διαστάσεως Πλάτωνος καὶ Ἀριστοτέλους: cf. Elias, *On Porphyry's Isagoge*, 39.6–8 = Porphyry 238T. Smith). Probably Porphyry was drawing on previous similar literature: we know that in the second century the Platonist Taurus had composed a work on the difference between the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle (Περὶ τῆς τῶν δογμάτων διαφορᾶς Πλάτωνος καὶ Ἀριστοτέλους: cf. *Suda, s.v.* "Taurus," τ 166 Adler = Taurus 3T. Gioè).[27] The presence of two titles suggests that Porphyry did not take Aristotle's philosophy as being identical with that of Plato. It would be helpful to know more about his approach to this question, and in particular about how exactly Porphyry demarcated Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies from each other. Fragments of his lost work *Against Boethus on the Soul* suggest that Porphyry rebutted the criticism on Plato's theory of the soul in the *Phaedo* leveled by Peripatetic philosophers such as Boethus of Sidon (Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 11.28.6–10 = Porphyry, 243F. Smith; 15.11.2–3 = Porphyry, 248F. Smith).[28] Porphyry probably rejected, or at least qualified, Aristotle's view that the soul is identical with the entelechy of the body and is not in motion (Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 15.11.4 = Porphyry 249F. Smith; Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 16.19–31 = Porphyry, 439F. Smith). It is, however, unclear whether Porphyry addressed his criticism principally to Aristotle or to what he took to be a wrong, viz. materialistic, interpretation of Aristotle developed by some Peripatetic philosophers. An interesting fragment from Porphyry's commentary on the *Physics* shows that he accepted Aristotle's theory of the four causes but regarded it as incomplete and in need of a Platonic supplement. Before Aristotle, Plato had provided a fuller account by also considering the paradigmatic and the instrumental causes (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 10.25–11.17; 23–29 = Porphyry, 120F. Smith).

Porphyry, however, did not merely compare Plato's and Aristotle's philosophies; he also wrote extensive exegetical work in the form of commentaries

27 Karamanolis 2006: 245–257.

28 Karamanolis 2006: 287–298; Trabattoni 2011.

on Aristotle's treatises. Apart from his two commentaries on the *Categories*, Porphyry certainly wrote a commentary on the first four books of the *Physics*, fragments of which are known though Simplicius' commentary on the *Physics* and through evidence from Arabic sources.[29] Furthermore, Porphyry wrote a commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation* that was used by Ammonius, Stephanus, and Boethius.[30] We have evidence of Porphyry's critical engagement with Aristotle's *Prior Analytics, Sophistical Refutations, Nicomachean Ethics*, and *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*), and he certainly wrote a monograph on categorical syllogisms that was the basis of Boethius' work on the same subject. On the basis of medieval evidence (Albert the Great and his Arabic sources), Michael Chase has suggested that Porphyry also wrote a commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*.[31] Finally, Boethius informs us that Porphyry wrote a commentary on Theophrastus' *On Affirmation and Negation* (*On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 17.24–27 = Porphyry 167T. Smith). Interestingly enough, we have no trace of a commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul*. This may be further confirmation that Porphyry regarded Aristotle's psychology with some caution. It is, however, not only the quantity but also the quality of his exegetical work that makes Porphyry's contribution so remarkable. His long commentary on the *Categories* (the *To Gedalius*) was a gigantic work, and his impact on the subsequent Neoplatonist commentary tradition was decisive: Simplicius (*On Aristotle's Categories* 2.5–6) calls Porphyry the "cause of all that is good for us (ὁ πάντων ἡμῖν τῶν καλῶν αἴτιος)" (trans. Chase).

In his commentary on the *Physics*, Porphyry argues that it is not the physicist's task to investigate the principles of physical beings. Rather, the physicist makes use of these principles, whereas it is the task of the metaphysician (τοῦ ἀναβεβηκότος) to investigate them (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 9.10–27 = Porphyry 119F. Smith). From this perspective, we can expect that Porphyry restricted himself to explaining Aristotle's physics while leaving a deeper account of the principles of nature to other works (e.g. his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*). This is actually what happens in most of our extant fragments, where there are no allusions to metaphysical or distinctively Platonic views, apart from those cases in which references to Plato are prompted by Aristotle's own references to Plato.

This is not the whole story, however. After all, we know that Porphyry engaged with Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*), and even his short commentary on the *Categories* contains cursory allusions to Aristotle's view of intelligible

29 Karamanolis 2004: 111–114; Moraux 1985; Adamson 2007; Smith 2012.

30 Chase 2012: 1355.

31 For more details on Porphyry's Aristotelian works, see Chase 2012: 1355–1357.

substances (Porphyry, *On Aristotle's Categories* 91.13–17).[32] Unfortunately, we know virtually nothing of Porphyry's work on *Lambda*, which would indeed provide crucial evidence for assessing his approach, but some of the extant evidence can nonetheless shed some light on this issue.[33] In a long fragment from his lost commentary on the *Physics*, Porphyry rejects Parmenides' and Melissus' positions and vindicates Aristotle's view that one and being have many senses (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 92.26–96.4; 15–20; 97.4–8 = Porphyry 129F. Smith). We do not need to go into the details of Porphyry's exegesis. What is relevant to the present issue is that Porphyry straightforwardly supports Aristotle's view that being is not a genus. The same view is found in the *Isagoge*, where Porphyry mentions Aristotle's *Categories* and argues that the ten categories are the first genera, whereas being is homonymous (*Isagoge* 6.6–11).

We do not know enough about how Porphyry harmonized this view with the one that being is an intelligible self-subsistent entity and multiple perceptible beings partake in it. It is very interesting, however, that while in his Aristotelian writings Porphyry supports Aristotle's view that being is said in many ways and is not a genus, his account of genus is nonetheless different from what we find in Peripatetic sources such as Alexander of Aphrodisias (*Questions* 2.28). For Porphyry regards genera as kinds of lineage or unities of derivation (ἀφ' ἑνός relation) in which the first genus plays the role of a principle or origin with respect to the species under it, in the same way as we call a plurality of people coming from a single origin a "genus" (so e.g. the Heraclids is the genus of people who come from Hercules; cf. *Isagoge* 2.7–13; 6.2–4).[34] This view actually plays a crucial role in late Platonist accounts of the hierarchy of beings, and later authors make use of it in order to explain why Aristotle's view about genera and categories can be seen as compatible with the Platonic hierarchy of beings. So, for example, Dexippus and Simplicius reply to Plotinus' objections by saying that perceptible and intelligible substances can be placed under a single genus according to the *ab uno* relation (Dexippus, *On Aristotle's*

32 On these lines, see Bodéüs 2008: 253 n. 2.

33 According to Hadot 1974, Dexippus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 41.4–17 depends on Porphyry's lost commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 12. *Contra*, see Luna 2001: 763–775.

34 Aristotle mentions the genealogical meaning of the genus in his list at *Metaphysics* 5.28, 1024a31–36, but unlike Porphyry he does not apply this meaning to the genus-species relation. According to Porphyry, instead, "we call a genus that under which a species is ordered, no doubt in virtue of a similarity with the former cases; for such a genus is a sort of origin for the items under it (ἀρχή τίς ἐστι τὸ τοιοῦτο γένος τῶν ὑφ' ἑαυτό), and a plurality is held to contain everything under it" (*Isagoge* 2.10–13, trans. Barnes).

Categories 40.28–41.3; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 76.23–78.3). At least in his extant works, Porphyry does not go that far, but he certainly paves the way for those later solutions by giving full emphasis to the genealogical meaning of the genus and by suggesting that *Aristotle's* genus-species relation can be conceived of according to this pattern.[35]

Furthermore, in the *Isagoge*, Porphyry explicitly refers to Plato in this context (*Isagoge* 6.14), and it is at least possible that Porphyry further emphasized this reading in his lost commentary on Plato's *Sophist* (Boethius, *On Division* 876 D = Porphyry, 169F. Smith). We can only speculate, but it is likely that in this commentary Porphyry expanded on what he hints at in the *Isagoge*, and combined Plato's account of genera and division in the *Sophist* with Aristotle's theory of genus, species, and *differentia*. That Porphyry was keen to use Aristotle's theory of the genus in a metaphysical or theological context is also shown by a very interesting objection raised by Iamblichus, who in his *Response to Porphyry*, rejects Porphyry's account of the divine hierarchy because Porphyry regards the divine as a kind of genus, where different levels of divine beings are determined by specific *differentiae* (Iamblichus, *Response to Porphyry* [*De mysteriis*] 1.4, p. 8.2–6 Saffrey-Segonds).[36]

4 Porphyry's Philosophical Project

Porphyry's approach to Aristotle as outlined so far leaves some questions open, the most obvious of which is why Porphyry adopted that peculiar approach. We can answer this question by invoking Porphyry's well-known conciliatory attitude. For instance, Dominic O'Meara has rightly noted that Porphyry is "a universalizing Platonist."[37] That said, it is perhaps possible to investigate further what motived Porphyry's whole enterprise. In connection with this investigation, it is very important to consider the impact on Porphyry of two prominent figures in third-century Platonism: the mysterious Ammonius Saccas and his student Plotinus. Very little is actually known about Ammonius, but the Neoplatonist Hierocles of Alexandria (fifth century AD) provides an extremely interesting testimony on Ammonius' teaching in his lost treatise *On Providence*, part of which is preserved in Photius.[38] A striking feature of this

35 More details in Chiaradonna 2002: 249–271.

36 Chiaradonna 2015.

37 O'Meara 1989: 27.

38 Photius, *Library* cod. 214, 172a2–9, 173a18–21, 173a32–40; cod. 251, 461a24–39: see Schwyzer 1983: 12–13 (TT. 12–15).

work is Hierocles' emphasis of Ammonius' conciliatory attitude to Plato and Aristotle and, in addition to this, of Ammonius' intellectual legacy (Books 6 and 7).[39] Hierocles is severely critical of those disciples of Plato and Aristotle who "tried to break the accord" (Photius, *Library* cod. 214, 173a25–26) between their teachers and did not refrain from falsifying (νοθεῦσαι: Photius, *Library* cod. 214, 173a27; 251.461a28) works by Plato and Aristotle in order to show that the two philosophers held contradictory views (Photius, *Library* cod. 214, 173a18–31; cod. 251, 461a24–30).[40] According to Hierocles, this discordant situation affected the philosophical schools until the arrival of Ammonius Saccas, "the one taught by God (θεοδίδακτος)" (Photius, *Library* cod. 251, 461a32 = Ammonius, T. 15 Schwyzer):

> He apprehended well the views of each of the two philosophers and brought them under one and the same *nous* and transmitted philosophy without conflicts to all of his disciples, and especially to the best of those acquainted with him, Plotinus, Origen, and their successors (Photius, *Library* cod. 251, 461a35–39 = Ammonius, T. 15 Schwyzer, trans. Karamanolis).[41]

Ammonius is said to have purified the views of the ancient masters, thus showing the agreement of Plato and Aristotle "in the essential and most necessary doctrines" (ἐν τοῖς ἐπικαίροις τε καὶ ἀναγκαιοτάτοις τῶν δογμάτων, *Library* cod. 214, 172a7–8).

This testimony raises a number of questions. First and foremost, where did Hierocles get his information about Ammonius? Ammonius is a most shadowy figure who probably did not leave any philosophical writings, and Hierocles lived two centuries after him. It is therefore necessary to postulate the existence of some intermediate source. Heinrich Dörrie has raised the hypothesis that Porphyry's lost book on the agreement between Plato and Aristotle might be Hierocles' source.[42] Certainty cannot be attained here, but this is a very attractive hypothesis for at least three reasons: first, Porphyry is our major

39 Photius reports a summary of Hierocles' work, divided into seven *logoi*, at *Library* 214, 173a5–40; details in Schibli 2002: 21–31.

40 On this, see O'Meara 1989: 112.

41 Οὗτος [...] εἶδε καλῶς τὰ ἑκατέρου καὶ συνήγαγεν εἰς ἕνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν νοῦν, καὶ ἀστασίαστον τὴν φιλοσοφίαν παραδέδωκε πᾶσι τοῖς αὐτοῦ γνωρίμοις, μάλιστα δὲ τοῖς ἀρίστοις τῶν αὐτῷ συγγεγονότων, Πλωτίνῳ καὶ Ὠριγένει καὶ τοῖς ἑξῆς ἀπὸ τούτων.

42 Dörrie 1955. Alternative hypotheses refer to Origen the Pagan and Plutarch of Athens. See Schibli 2002: 28 n. 96.

source about Ammonius;[43] second, he was close enough in time to Ammonius to get information about his teaching; finally, he was deeply interested in the debate on Plato and Aristotle. Hierocles' testimony suggests some conclusions. Ammonius was interested in the debate about Plato and Aristotle and he argued, forcefully, in favor of a conciliatory position. Ammonius' teaching of Plato and Aristotle was probably part of a harmonizing account of the Greek philosophical tradition, since Hierocles claims that Ammonius transmitted a unified view about philosophy to his disciples ("philosophy without conflicts"). The least we can say is that Ammonius' program so outlined is so strikingly similar to Porphyry's own philosophical program that one might plausibly raise some doubts about Hierocles' (or Porphyry's) reliability.[44] It is as if Porphyry was presenting Ammonius, Plotinus' master, as prefiguring his universalizing Platonism and, in particular, his own efforts to harmonize Plato and Aristotle.

Hierocles' account is precise about one detail. On the one hand, Hierocles is critical of those students of Plato and Aristotle who did not refrain from falsifying the writings of their masters in order to show that the two philosophers held contradictory views. On the other hand, he praises Ammonius because he purified the old masters' views and showed the agreement between Plato's and Aristotle's most essential doctrines (*dogmata*). Apparently, Hierocles (or rather his source) does not credit Ammonius with any commentary or textual work on Plato and Aristotle. It is tempting to suppose that in his lost book on the agreement between Plato and Aristotle Porphyry represented himself as achieving the program sketched by Ammonius. If so, in showing the harmony between Plato's and Aristotle's doctrines (*dogmata*), Ammonius paved the way for a proper exegetical treatment of Aristotle, that is, he paved the way for Porphyry.

Even if Ammonius was interested in Aristotle, as Hierocles/Porphyry suggests, the least we can say is that his students did not unanimously share his preferences. From what we know (and we know very little), neither Longinus nor Origen (and neither the pagan nor the Christian Origen, if the two are indeed to be distinguished) had a keen interest in Aristotle.[45] The situation is however completely different with Ammonius' most famous disciple, i.e.

43 See Schwyzer 1983: 15–22; 48.

44 See the judicious remarks in Dörrie (†)-Baltes 1993: 249.

45 Proclus, indeed, says that Origen the Platonist (Proclus, *Platonic Theology* 2.4, 31.21 Saffrey-Westerink) was influenced by "Peripatetic innovations" and thus identified the Intellect as the first principle, but it is very difficult to make much of this statement. On Origen the Christian and Aristotle, see now Tzamalikos 2007: 339. Ramelli 2014 has recently

Plotinus, who is instead very well acquainted with Aristotle and the Peripatetic exegesis on his writings. It might be significant that in his *Life of Plotinus* Porphyry is eager to stress the connection between Plotinus' way of teaching and that of his master Ammonius. In a famous passage, Porphyry says that Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is "concentrated (καταπεπύκνωται)" in Plotinus' writings (*Life of Plotinus* 14.5–7) and Peripatetic commentaries such as those by Aspasius, Alexander, and Adrastus were read in his school together with commentaries on Plato (*Life of Plotinus* 14.12–13). Porphyry adds that Plotinus "did not just speak straight out of these books but took a distinctive personal line in his consideration, and brought the *nous* of Ammonius to bear on the investigations in hand" (*Life of Plotinus* 14.14–16, trans. Armstrong). There is some debate about the exact meaning of Ammonius' *nous* in this passage.[46] If we accept Dörrie's hypothesis that Porphyry is behind Hierocles' report, it is tempting to connect the reference to Ammonius' *nous* in *Life of Plotinus* 14 with the remark that Ammonius brought Plato and Aristotle together under one and the same *nous*. If so, in *Life of Plotinus* 14, Porphyry is discreetly suggesting that Plotinus did not merely read Plato, Aristotle, and their commentators; he also showed the doctrinal agreement between the two masters.

Aristotle's philosophical terms and notions are indeed ubiquitous in the *Enneads*, so that it is impossible to make sense of Plotinus' views without constantly comparing them to their Aristotelian sources. Moreover, although no philosopher later than Epicurus is mentioned in the *Enneads*, Plotinus appears to be well acquainted with the Peripatetic debates and in particular with Alexander of Aphrodisias.[47] Should all this be seen as a legacy of Ammonius' teaching? This is what Hierocles/Porphyry apparently suggests when he says that Ammonius "transmitted philosophy without conflicts to all of his disciples, and especially to the best of those acquainted with him, Plotinus, Origen, and their successors." I would like to suggest that, both in his book on the agreement between Plato and Aristotle and in his *Life of Plotinus*, Porphyry aimed to draw the following picture: Ammonius had conclusively shown the agreement between the most essential doctrines of the two masters and so he had transmitted a philosophy without conflict to his successors. After him, Plotinus had been familiar not only with Plato and his exegetes, but also with Aristotle and the Peripatetic commentators. Furthermore, in his lectures Plotinus had followed Ammonius' method of teaching (Ammonius' *nous*) and so showed

raised the hypothesis that Alexander of Aphrodisias was known to Origen. The issue is extremely interesting and certainly requires further investigation.

46 Karamanolis 2006: 200–201.

47 For more details, see Chiaradonna 2014a.

the agreement between the two masters. In this picture, Porphyry and his exegetical work on Aristotle complete the project undertaken by Ammonius and Plotinus.

If this was Porphyry's self-presentation, it was indeed a tendentious one. We will probably never know if Plotinus' reading of Aristotle depended on Ammonius' teaching or was part of his original philosophical approach. At any rate, Plotinus' approach to Aristotle is significantly different from Ammonius' "philosophy without conflicts" as outlined by Porphyry/Hierocles. Plotinus is actually *critical* of Aristotle. This emerges especially when Plotinus expounds key theories such as those of categories, substance, motion, and time (on substance: 6.1.1–3 and 6.3.4–10; on motion: 6.1.15–19 and 6.3.21–26; on time: 3.7.9 and 13). His criticism is a distinctive one that implies not so much a polemical and ideological rejection such as that of Atticus, but rather an in-depth internal discussion of Aristotle at the end of which Plotinus' Platonist views emerge as prompted by the internal difficulties in Aristotle's accounts.[48] In Plotinus' school, Porphyry was actually confronted with this peculiar approach to Aristotle. Henri Dominique Saffrey has suggested that the disagreement between Porphyry and Plotinus on how to approach Aristotle eventually led Porphyry to leave Plotinus' school.[49] This intriguing hypothesis cannot be proved, but Porphyry's account of Plotinus' teaching in *Life of Plotinus* 14 appears to have been embellished. Porphyry does not say a single word about Plotinus' critical attitude toward Aristotle. What he does say is that Plotinus was familiar with Aristotle's treatises (in particular, the *Metaphysics*), and the Peripatetic commentary tradition, which he used alongside Plato and the Platonic tradition. In addition, Porphyry states that Plotinus' method of teaching was close to that of Ammonius, who was (as Porphyry possibly argued in his lost work on Plato and Aristotle) the originator of the idea of a philosophy without conflicts, that is, a philosophy that shows how Plato and Aristotle agree in their most essential *dogmata*. Here valuable information appears to be mixed with a somewhat tendentious presentation that might be connected to Porphyry's own philosophical program.

In a way, the whole of Porphyry's exegetical work on Aristotle can be seen as a response to Plotinus, and the fact that Plotinus is never mentioned explicitly in what is extant of that work just reinforces this hypothesis. It was certainly not Porphyry's aim to criticize his master overtly.[50] I would suggest that Porphyry

48 I have developed this reading in Chiaradonna 2002 and 2014b.

49 Saffrey 1992.

50 There is a vast bibliography on the relation between Plotinus' and Porphyry's attitudes toward Aristotle. For a *status quaestionis*, see Chiaradonna 2002: 15–40.

aimed to vindicate Plotinus' legacy by tacitly correcting some features of his master's position while at the same time offering an embellished account of the previous tradition as preparing Porphyry's own conciliatory efforts and culminating in them. Porphyry's account of Ammonius' teaching, and of Plotinus' relation to it, was determined by this distinctive approach. Porphyry's conciliatory project may have been connected with his order of priorities, which was different from that of his master: Porphyry regarded anti-Christian polemics as the most urgent task to undertake, a task whose achievement demanded the best resources of true philosophy: Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus.[51]

If this was Porphyry's aim, Plotinus' criticism of Aristotle had to be neutralized rather than rebutted. At the same time, after Plotinus it was simply impossible to rehearse the old pre-Plotinian harmonizing approach to Aristotle. After Plotinus, that particular way of achieving harmony between Plato and Aristotle probably appeared to be outdated and inadequate. In order to show that Aristotle agrees with Plato, it was no longer enough to say that some Aristotelian theories are prefigured in Plato. Plotinus' engagement with Aristotle and the Peripatetic commentators established a much higher standard for debates about Plato and Aristotle. Porphyry had to take up Plotinus' challenge with the aim of integrating Aristotle into a Platonic philosophical outlook through an in-depth exegetical work that crucially relies on the previous Peripatetic commentators. After Plotinus, it was necessary to make sense of Aristotle in his own terms in order to properly integrate his philosophy into Platonism.

5 Conclusion

I opened this chapter with two questions, which I am now in a position to answer. The first question was: *What is Porphyry's contribution to the reception of Aristotle in antiquity?* I would answer this question in the way already suggested by George Karamanolis: Porphyry is the first Platonist commentator on Aristotle and this marks a new beginning, very different from the pre-Plotinian Platonist approaches to Aristotle that came before. To be more precise, it is Porphyry's specific contribution to have brought into the philosophical background of Platonism an in-depth exegesis of Aristotle's treatises and an extensive knowledge not only of Aristotle but also of the Aristotelian commentary tradition. The second question was: *How does Porphyry's reading of Aristotle fit into his overall work?* I would answer this question by suggesting that Porphyry's

51 On this point, I am in agreement with Evangeliou 1988: 5.

exegetical work on Aristotle is part of his harmonizing reading of the pagan philosophical tradition (probably as part of Porphyry's anti-Christian program) and, furthermore, that it can be seen as a tacit response to his master Plotinus. Without Plotinus, Porphyry's new level of critical engagement with Aristotle would be simply unthinkable.

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CHAPTER 17

An Intellective Perspective on Aristotle: Iamblichus the Divine

Jan Opsomer

1 Introduction

Iamblichus (*ca.* 245–320) is sometimes called the second founder of Neoplatonism.[1] His innovations were essential to late Neoplatonic philosophy as it developed in the schools of Athens in particular, but also Alexandria. These innovations do not just pertain to philosophical tenets, but also to philosophical method and style. Iamblichus defined stricter exegetical rules and new metaphysical laws. He also created an alliance between philosophy and theurgy and insisted on the philosophical value of various religious traditions and religious-philosophical texts like the Chaldaean oracles. Iamblichus was, moreover, decisive in shaping the school curriculum and, more generally, the canon of texts that, whether philosophical or religious, carried authority for philosophical research. He, for instance, systematically included texts belonging to a Pythagorean tradition—a tradition which to some extent was of his own construal. His selection of philosophically important texts was in line with certain earlier developments, but it was Iamblichus who established a real canon. Indeed, after Iamblichus the canon remained more or less stable.

If we look at the importance assigned to Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition, it is clear that the difference between Iamblichus and his arch-rival Porphyry does not reside in which texts were held to be worthy of profound study. The difference is situated rather in the role and status attributed to them within the Platonic philosophical system. From the early Imperial era onward, Aristotle was seen by most Platonists as an ally, unlike the Stoics and Epicureans, who were regarded as opponents. Yet the extent to which Aristotelian ideas were incorporated varied greatly. Different parts of Aristotle's thought attracted different Platonists and the strategies used for integrating and assimilating them diverged. Here Iamblichus made his mark, as will become clear below.

1 Praechter 1910: 203.

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2 Iamblichus the Commentator

Later authors have preserved fragments of Iamblichus' commentaries, which would otherwise have been lost. These include commentaries on various Platonic dialogues[2] and commentaries on Aristotle.[3] Of the latter, by far the most fragments stem from the commentary on the *Categories*. There is some evidence of commentaries on the *Prior Analytics, On Interpretation*, and possibly *On the Heavens*, but only from the commentary on the *Prior Analytics* can we be more or less certain to possess some fragments. Indeed, the references to Iamblichus in later commentaries on the *On Interpretation* could stem from Iamblichus' commentary on the *Prior Analytics*.[4] Four references to Iamblichus in Simplicius' commentary on Aristotle's *On the Heavens* are not specific enough to allow us to infer with certainty that he wrote a commentary on this work: two are about its *skopos* (1.24–2.5; 5.4–13); the other two concern the nature of the moon (457.6–14) and the theory of eccentric orbits (507.12–14), which could easily have been discussed in other works. A single reference to Iamblichus in Simplicius' commentary on the *Physics* that is neither specifically attributed to a work known to us nor parallel to any passage in another commentary is certainly not sufficient to infer that he was the author of a similar commentary: on the contrary, the absence of extensive references to any such work suggests that he did not write a commentary on the *Physics*. There is no evidence that he wrote a commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul*, although he certainly knew this treatise well. The references to Iamblichus in the commentaries by Philoponus and Ps-Simplicius on Aristotle's *On the Soul* stem almost certainly from Iamblichus' own work by that name.[5] There can be no doubt that Iamblichus regarded Aristotle's *On the Soul* as a foundational work for the study of the soul, although he also directed fundamental criticisms against it from his Platonic perspective. Finally, one might think there are some indications of a commentary on the *Metaphysics*, but they do not hold up to closer scrutiny.[6] All in all, this is a rather limited set of works on which Iamblichus is known to have written commentaries. His choice of Aristotelian

2 See Dillon 1973.

3 The fragments from Iamblichus' commentary were collected by Dalsgaard Larsen 1972. Larsen failed to include some fragments preserved by Joannes Lydus. Taormina 2002 discusses a testimony in Leo Magentinus concerning Iamblichus' interpretation of the dialectical question (*On Interpretation* 11, 20b23). Romano 2012 has included some further fragments.

4 See Dalsgaard Larsen 1972: 52–55, 302; Blumenthal 1997: 5.

5 Dalsgaard Larsen 1972: 62, 1; Blumenthal 1974; Dillon 1987.

6 Steel 1978: 124.

texts certainly reflects his philosophical interests, which were largely indebted to those of Plotinus and Porphyry. The same is true for the pre-eminence, among the fragments, of the commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*. This was certainly the most important of Iamblichus' commentaries on Aristotle.

Iamblichus is a meticulous commentator. He pays attention to every detail of the text, considers various interpretive possibilities which he checks against information from other passages and works and, as we will see, from other authors believed to belong to the same philosophical tradition. Modern advocates of unitarian interpretations of Plato and Aristotle pale before his way of proceeding. Iamblichus systematically uses the work of earlier commentators, most notably Porphyry, but also, in the case of Aristotle, Alexander of Aphrodisias and occasionally also other Peripatetic commentators such as Andronicus of Rhodes or Boethus of Sidon. He makes it a requirement to begin the interpretation of a philosophical work by determining the precise overarching topic or goal (σκοπός) of the work commented upon. Discussions of larger sections are combined with discussions of smaller sections, single sentences, expressions, and even words. There is some evidence that Iamblichus already organized his material by means of the distinction between θεωρία and λέξις known from later commentators (discussion of the philosophical content of larger sections and the meaning of single expressions, respectively).[7]

By writing extensive and detailed commentaries on Aristotle, and in particular on the *Categories*, Iamblichus continues a tradition inaugurated by Porphyry that testifies to the new position the teachings of Aristotle had acquired since Plotinus and probably already his teacher Ammonius Saccas.[8] Unlike Porphyry, however, Iamblichus does not confine himself to an elucidation of Aristotle's text within the framework of the Aristotelian ontology of the world available to sense-perception—the framework for which the categories were originally devised and to which Porphyry voluntarily restricted himself, at least in his *Commentaries*. Instead, Iamblichus wants to show the relevance of the categories to a much more ambitious Platonic ontology that includes not just the Forms but rather a complex hierarchy, from the highest intelligible beings down to ordinary sense-perceptible substances. What is more, he does not claim mere compatibility between Platonic ontology and the text of

7 Dillon 1973: 235.

8 See chapter 16 (Porphyry and the Aristotelian Tradition). Michael Griffin has argued that Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 12.10–13.12 echoes Iamblichus' arguments regarding the philosophical importance of the *Categories*: Griffin 2012.

Aristotle: he is convinced that the ontology of the Platonists is *contained* in the *Categories* and thinks he can prove this.[9]

In order to make his interpretation possible, Iamblichus introduces a radically new exegetical strategy, which serves his primary aim, namely to incorporate the philosophical truths encapsulated in Aristotle's work into his own philosophy. As a Platonist who claims a Pythagorean origin for Plato's doctrines, he defines himself as a Pythagorean. Iamblichus achieved his goal, as later Platonists perceived Iamblichus' views and his approach to exegesis as Pythagorean, while regarding him at the same time as a Platonist.[10] As a matter of fact, in Iamblichus' view a true Platonist *is* a Pythagorean, since Plato himself was a follower of Pythagoras. What Iamblichus failed to see, but what is crystal clear to historians of philosophy in our day, is that Pythagoreanism as he knew it was the outcome of complex historical processes and, more particularly, that it was to a large extent the product of developments in later Platonism. Iamblichus' attempt to bring Platonism back to its Pythagorean roots was greatly facilitated by this peculiar situation—nowhere is this clearer than in the case of the Pythagorean pseudepigrapha, as will be explained below—but he probably did not realize he was as it were staring at a mirror (or maybe we should call it a kaleidoscope because of its refraction of partial images and combination of fresh mirages from shards). By focusing on the Pythagorean side of Platonism, Iamblichus was, moreover, recreating a particular image of Platonism, one in which certain trends were enlarged and others disappeared from view.

Iamblichus applies this interpretive idea not only to the interpretation of Plato, but also to other philosophers, including Aristotle. In some respects, he argues, Aristotle and the Peripatetic tradition turn out to be heirs of Pythagoras.[11] Aristotle and the Peripatetics are part of the same tradition of wisdom, although, contrary to Plato, they have sometimes strayed from the truth.

For many more points of doctrine than we would acknowledge today (indeed, contrary to contemporary scholars, who often shy away from words like "doctrine" when talking about Plato and Aristotle, Iamblichus and other

9 See Griffin 2012: 175 (his italics): "On the whole, the Neoplatonists after Iamblichus do not merely suggest that the *Categories* contain an ontology which is pedagogically *compatible* with Plato's, but that the metaphysics of the *Categories* actually is Platonic."

10 E.g. Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.308.17–24; Damascius, *On Plato's Philebus* 57.3; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 116.25; Psellus, *Opuscula* 69.38 O'Meara.

11 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 351.4–8; 415.30–34. Yet Iamblichus also points out that Aristotle's knowledge of the Pythagorean tradition has its limits: cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 192.17–18; *On Aristotle's Physics* 60.7–10.

Platonists regard the ancient thinkers primarily as teachers presenting us with *doctrines*, thus ending up with a more dogmatic picture of these philosophers than that of the current mainstream), Iamblichus perceives a fundamental agreement between Plato and Aristotle. Yet he is aware that this agreement is not always obvious. He indeed thinks that the similarities are often hidden and become apparent only after a careful analysis of Aristotle's texts. This view has to do with his conviction that deep truths are encoded or even encrypted in the texts of the ancients. This assumption is necessary to explain many of his interpretations, and it is reflected in a specific type of interpretation associated with his name, the intellective contemplation (νοερὰ θεωρία).

3 The Commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*

In the introduction to his own commentary on the *Categories*, Simplicius presents a short account of the history of the interpretation of this work. He clearly considers Iamblichus' commentary to be one of the most serious and thorough contributions to our understanding of the *Categories*, as can be inferred also from the fact that he makes extensive use of Iamblichus' interpretations throughout his commentary. It was a long work, so Simplicius tells us, in which Iamblichus followed Porphyry to the letter, offering new assessments on certain points, presenting a more accurate articulation of the argument, and presenting a more succinct account of long-winded school discussions that took the form of replies to objections (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 2.9–13; 79.13). Simplicius is of course referring to Porphyry's long but lost commentary addressed to Gedalius. He singles out two remarkable features of Iamblichus' commentary for a brief discussion: the importance attached to Archytas' *On the All* and the use of so-called intellectual contemplation as an exegetical tool (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 13–25).

Let us review these two features of Iamblichus' critical engagement with Aristotle, beginning with the role played by Archytas' treatise *On the All*. This is in fact a work written long after the death of its supposed author, the ancient Pythagorean Archytas. Whoever wrote or published this text under the name of Archytas obviously wanted to present it as the model for Aristotle's *Categories*, that is, as the work on which the latter is based. "On the all" are the first words of the text that Simplicius elsewhere cites under the title *On the Universal Formulae* (Περὶ τῶν καθόλου λόγων) and that has been preserved independently in a single manuscript, *Ambrosianus* 23 (A 92 *sup.*).[12]

12 Cf. Szlezák 1972: 1–7. For the title, see Szlezák 1972: 94–95; Gavray 2011: 94–95.

Like Iamblichus, Simplicius was convinced that the author of this text was indeed the ancient Pythagorean Archytas. He even thought that Aristotle, when making cross-references to the *Categories*, used a different title on purpose, namely *Categories*, lest his readers think he was in fact referring to Archytas (*On Aristotle's Categories* 18.9–11). Simplicius' explanation of the importance of the idea of using Archytas' text for the interpretation of Aristotle's *Categories* probably reflects Iamblichus' reasons rather faithfully. Now, if one believes that Aristotle's *Categories* is in fact based on an earlier Pythagorean text from which it moreover deviates by omissions, additions, and different wordings, the consequences for both the interpretation of Aristotle's text and one's assessment of the development and origin of Aristotle's ideas about the Pythagoreans *and* Plato are tremendous.[13] For the basic assumption is now that Plato was not only familiar with the views expressed in Aristotle's *Categories*, but that he also shared most of them. This lends legitimacy to the attempts to uncover Platonic ideas in Aristotle's text and to elucidate Aristotle by supplementing from Plato what is lacking in Aristotle. After all, Plato's discussion of related matters as well as Aristotle's *Categories* are now officially part of one and the same tradition. The idea that the ten categories were already known to Plato was not new, but now it could be substantiated by pointing toward Plato's alleged source. Simplicius, very likely echoing Iamblichus, gives a summary of what was already contained in Archytas' *On the All*: the division into ten categories, the distinctive tokens of each of them illustrated by useful examples, their common and individual properties, their specific differences (which probably means the differentiae of the species into which each of the categories is divided), the order of the categories. This summary is quite accurate and shows what according to Simplicius and probably also Iamblichus was important in the text. This implies some shifts with respect to Aristotle. For instance, as we can see by glancing at this table of contents, the sequence of the categories was significant in the eyes of Ps-Archytas, Iamblichus, and Simplicius. Aristotle himself does not appear to have considered this an issue—at least, he does not discuss the order of the categories anywhere (although this has not prevented some modern scholars from speculating about it).[14] As we will see below, like the majority of later commentators, Iamblichus raises ontological questions that surpass the framework of Aristotle's ontology, precisely because his ontology is a Platonic one that includes the Forms. Simplicius, following Iamblichus,

13 See also Dalsgaard Larsen 1972: 1.233.

14 E.g. Studtmann 2008, inspired by medieval interpretations, in particular that of Thomas Aquinas, or also Vuillemin 1967, chapter two.

appeals to Archytas to argue that the categories, albeit with the exception of substance, are exclusively about sense-perceptible particulars, not about the Forms (*On Aristotle's Categories* 378.1–379.2). The so-called dependent categories or accidents thus apply only to ordinary objects, whereas substances can be found both here and in the transcendent realm (Ps-Archytas, *On Universal Formulae* 50.24–51.5 Thesleff). This notwithstanding, both commentators start from the assumption that the categories apply primarily to the world available to sense-perception and were conceived with this world in mind, even in the case of substance. These assumptions are key to their understanding of the text and to the solution they offer to many specific interpretive problems. Archytas' text also lends support to the integretation of Aristotle's categorial analysis with hylomorphism. For unlike Aristotle's *Categories*, Ps-Archytas explicitly states that there are three types of substance: matter, form, and the compound of matter and form (39.17–19 Thesleff; cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 91.14–33). Hylomorphism thus becomes part and parcel of the theory of the categories.

Now let us turn to the second remarkable feature of Iamblichus' commentary on the *Categories*. Simplicius informs us that where it was appropriate Iamblichus cited the text of Archytas, unpacking it where it was "intellectively concentrated," showing the agreement with Aristotle, and explaining the few cases of disagreement. Simplicius comments that this is indeed the correct way of proceeding, as it was Aristotle's wish to remain faithful to Archytas (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 3.20–25). Unfolding what is "intellectively concentrated" presumably belongs to the procedure known as "intellective contemplation," to which I will come back below. It rests on the assumption that in certain philosophic and religious texts information is contained in a highly concentrated form and in need of careful explication. There is a certain analogy with the relation between the Platonic Intellect and Soul: the Intellect contains in a more unified way what will at a lower level appear as the discursive contents of the soul; in other words, the contents of Intellect are the paradigms for certain thoughts entertained by the soul, but in the soul these contents are no longer concentrated in one object, but rather spread out discursively in the form of *logoi* in which one thing is said *after* the other and *of* the other. Analogously, we may presume, Iamblichus' elucidations are supposed to set out discursively what is indicated in a very concise and as it were encrypted way in the original texts. It is also interesting that Simplicius emphasizes Iamblichus' tendency to stress the agreement between Archytas and Aristotle and explains the reason he had for it. The agreement is not total, however. One *de facto* reason for the few real discrepancies lies in the fact that the text of

Ps-Archytas was written in order to promote a specific Platonic point of view,[15] which sometimes resulted in ideas that are hard to reconcile with the original Aristotle. Iamblichus appears to have been prepared to admit that Aristotle and the Peripatetics sometimes failed to master the deep insights contained in the Pythagorean text (e.g. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 350.32–351.8).

Iamblichus' use of "intellective contemplation," or as John Dillon has termed it, "higher criticism"[16] (νοερὰ θεωρία),[17] is related to, but not dependent upon, the assumption that Aristotle used Archytas as a model. It suffices, on the side of the object of study, that a text display intellective concentration in the sense explained above, so that it can be explicated at more than one level. For the intellective approach, however, it is crucial that the multitude of levels can be reduced to a single focal point. Intellective density on the part of the object, the text, may be a requirement, yet the intellective quality of the interpretation depends primarily on the intellectual accomplishment of the interpreting subject, whose duty it is to achieve the unity proper to intellect in his (or her) explication of the text. This unity can only be warranted through analogies that are to be established between the different levels of interpretation. It is certainly no coincidence that analogy was considered to be an eminently Pythagorean principle. When Iamblichus, for instance, determines the *skopos* of the *Timaeus* as Nature, other domains of knowledge should be understood as displaying analogous relations and thus be contained in it.[18] Hence an allegorical reading can be harmoniously combined with a more literal interpretation. Unlike Porphyry, who normally focuses on a single distinct domain, typically the direct topic of Aristotle's text, Iamblichus frequently takes an "epoptic" perspective, which means that he lays claim to a superior standpoint from which he is allegedly able to contemplate several levels in one and to develop a more universal interpretation that includes the divine (Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.204.24–27; Anonymous, *Prolegomena to Plato* 21.29–32). A concrete example of this hermeneutic strategy is Iamblichus' explanation of the capacity of substance to receive contraries (*Categories* 5, 4a10–11). Aristotle of course means that a substance can take on contrary properties sequentially: a sense-

15 See chapter 10 (The Appropriation of Aristotle in the Ps-Pythagorean Treatises).

16 Dillon 1997: 66. On this concept, see also Cardullo 1997; Chiaradonna 1996: 87–88; Praechter 1910: 128–39.

17 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 2.13; 361.7; 364.6; 374.8; 376.12. The same technique is meant when Iamblichus is said to look for "more intellective causes" (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 216.6) or to adopt a "contemplative" frame of mind (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 133.8; 146.22–23; 271.7; 327.7; 350.10).

18 See Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.30.2–18.

perceptible substance that is hot can also become cold. Iamblichus, however, thinks that this property characterizes all levels of substance: true intelligible substances just as well as ontologically deficient sublunary substances and the unchanging substances in the heavens. Yet this characteristic pertains to them in a different, analogically related manner. The highest kinds (μέγιστα γένη) of Plato's *Sophist*, Being, Motion and Rest, Sameness and Difference, coexist in the intelligible. The difference from sense-perceptible sublunary substance is that intelligible substance is capable of receiving contraries simultaneously, whereas ordinary earthly substances receive them in sequence. Celestial substances, taking up a position that is ontologically intermediate between them, fall short of exhibiting fixed contrary properties simultaneously, but they do perform contrary motions at the same time. Thus the capacity to receive contraries differs from one level of substance to another, but in all cases the fundamental principle remains the same (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 116.25–118.2; the passage is explained in Dillon 1997: 70–71).[19] It will be clear that this hermeneutic tool allows Iamblichus not only to explain a text at different levels, the alleged possibility of which may baffle more sober-minded readers, but also to argue for the agreement between Plato and Aristotle. Where Porphyry discusses what Iamblichus sees as the mere surface meaning of Aristotle's text, Iamblichus is able to detect several hidden layers of meaning, corresponding to Pythagorean (that is Platonic) doctrine—or so he claims. Iamblichus even argues, based on this method, that, contrary to appearances, Aristotle did not really criticize the theory of Forms. For most Platonists, this went too far: this claim of Iamblichus failed to convince even those who were generally inclined to see harmony wherever possible (Elias/David, *On Aristotle's Categories* 123.1–3). It was not the only time that Iamblichus' outlandish speculations were met with mild disbelief and good-humoured irony (see e.g. Olympiodorus, *On Plato's Phaedo* 10.1.13–15). Nonetheless, his hermeneutic approach was very influential in the later schools. It allowed the insertion of Platonic and Pythagorean ideas into an Aristotelian context and made Aristotle's texts bear fruit in domains other than those for which they were originally intended. This, too, was a lasting accomplishment.

4 Ontology and the *Categories*

The application of the *Categories* to ontology was not self-evident. This move was justified by Iamblichus' definition of the *skopos* of the treatise, in which

19 See also Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 169.9–27.

he combines the three leading points of view, according to which Aristotle's primary concern are either words, beings, or concepts. The goal of the *Categories*, according to Iamblichus, consists in *simple* (i.e. non-composite), *primary words, which, through simple, primary concepts signify the primary and most generic beings* (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 13.19–21; see also Fr. 3–9 Larsen). This synthetic position was neither revolutionary nor unusual,[20] but may have been directed, or may have perceived to be directed, against Porphyry's more narrow approach based on the idea that the subject of the *Categories* is words.[21] Hence Iamblichus in his commentary sees himself as justified in examining the ontological grounding of the categories of predication with respect to their number and the relations of ontological priority obtaining between them. He refuses to follow Plotinus' radical criticism and essentially accepts the categorial system and its applicability to the sense-perceptible world.[22] Yet, as we have already seen, since intellective contemplation belongs to his toolkit, he can show that the categories apply analogically to higher realities. True substance is situated in the intelligible realm, but there are also intellective, psychic, celestial, and terrestial substances, each displaying the characteristics of substances in the manner appropriate to its level. As a Platonist, Iamblichus holds that lower substances are dependent upon higher substances and are their images, yet he also acknowledges that we can get a grasp of intelligible substance by starting from their images, which are more familiar to us, and using the principle of analogy (Iamblichus makes use of the standard Aristotelian distinction between that which is clear and obvious to us and that which is clear by nature—see e.g. *Posterior Analytics* 1.2, 71b33–72a4). The highest, intelligible substance, is moreover held to produce all substances. Therefore it is not merely their genus, but also their principle, whereas all subsequent substances participate in it to varying degrees, which define their respective ontological ranks. Iamblichus thus reinterprets the genus as a transcendent Form, in which sense-perceptible beings participate. It is not predicated synonymously of the latter, but rather paronymously.[23] While Iamblichus retains the term genus and considers the categories as highest genera, a view that had become common,[24] his genus is no longer a classical Aristotelian

20 For a nice survey, see de Haas 2004: 49–51.

21 Olympiodorus, *Introduction to Aristotle* 18.29–19.6; 19.36–20.12.

22 Chiaradonna 1996; Chiaradonna 2004: 132–33.

23 Chiaradonna 2007: 136–40.

24 De Haas 2004.

genus, but a hierarchically structured quasi-genus, as A. C. Lloyd (1990: 78–85) has termed it.

It has become clear by now that Iamblichus, quite unlike Porphyry, does not restrict himself to a dry elucidation of Aristotle's text, clarifying problems of understanding and solving difficulties raised by previous interpreters while staying close to Aristotle's intentions. This remark should, however, be understood *de re*, not *de dicto*: it is quite likely that Iamblichus was fully convinced that he respected Aristotle's intentions, given what he appeared to believe about the Pythagorean-Platonic background of the *Categories*. In reality, however, Iamblichus develops a new theory of the categories that goes far beyond what Aristotle wrote.

Although the substance category alone is directly applicable to the Forms, Iamblichus also accepts transcendent analogues for physical time, place, and motion. Even though they are not themselves Aristotelian categories, they are associated with categories: time with "when," place with "where," motion with "acting" and "being-acted-upon."[25] In his accounts of place, time, and motion, Iamblichus combines information from Aristotle and Archytas on the *Categories*, from the *Physics* (4.1–5, 208a27–213a11; 4.10–14, 217b29–224a17), from *Generation and Corruption* (1.7–9, 323b1–327a29) and from various Platonic source texts and ideas.[26] As Simplicius explains, whereas the *Categories* look at these matters from the perspective of the signification of words, the true nature of these concepts is explained in the physical treatises and in the *Metaphysics*. "When" and "where" are different from time and place, which are quantities, as they signify the relation of local and temporal things to time and place (*On Aristotle's Categories* 342.21–28). Whereas Ps-Archytas (and Andronicus) treated time and place as the categories under which "when" and "where" are subsumed—which Simplicius explains as a difference of perspective, as Archytas was interested in time and place as true principles (*On Aristotle's Categories* 347.6–12)—Iamblichus deals with them as quantities and keeps them distinct from 'when' and 'where', following the (pre-Porphyrian, Peripatetic) tradition, as he expressly states (345.8–9). He thus reaffirms the number of categories *contra Plotinum* (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's*

25 Simplicius presents a classification that is more encompassing than the categories, comparing it to Iamblichus' classification: *On Aristotle's Categories* 67.26–68.16 and, for Iamblichus, 68.16–21. Strictly speaking, time and place are extended and fall under the category of quantity, although Simplicius, who is here probably following Iamblichus, connects them to "when" and "where." Cf. Hoffmann 2000: 360, n. 22.

26 Cf. Hoffmann 1980; Taormina 1999: 57–95; Hoffmann 2000.

Categories 342.29–32; cf. Plotinus 6.1–3 [42–44], especially 6.1.13–14). Regarding both time and place, Simplicius gives us an account of Iamblichus' intellective contemplation (*On Aristotle's Categories* 350.10–356.7; 361.7–364.6), without however following him, since he himself prefers the more measured solution given by Damascius (*On Aristotle's Categories* 364.7–35).

For his theory of time (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 350.10–352.21; *On Aristotle's Physics* 786.11–787.5),[27] Iamblichus uses Ps-Archytas against Plotinus. Ps-Archytas defines time as the number of a particular motion, which Iamblichus explains as the principal, unitary, and causal motion, source of the lower multifarious types of motion. This first time, itself preceded by intelligible Eternity, is intellective and unextended. It is the first cause of Becoming and the monadic cause of the motion of the soul. Psychic time is extended and the cause of the time of nature, the continuous flux of disappearing nows. At all levels, time is not merely a measure of motion, but rather a power that causes structure and order. The principle of analogy explains the presence of time at different ontological levels. Likewise place is in fact a series of principles at different levels. In the primary sense, it is an intellective monad. Particular bodies participate in place in order to be spatially distinct and to constitute themselves as unified extended bodies. At every level of being, the higher and more perfect entity causes and "encloses" the inferior and contains it as a cohesive cause (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 362.5–7; 363.6–8). "Place" stands for this cause of cohesion and unification through enclosure, which pervades all extended things and encompasses every distance and extension (Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.164.22–27; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 639.22–640.11; 642.13–18; *On Aristotle's Categories* 362.5–7; 363.6–8). Like time, place is a power that lends structure and identity to extended things by keeping them separate from their neighbours. In their highest form, these principles are intellective and unextended.

In his account of motion, too, Iamblichus polemicizes against Plotinus and Porphyry. Simplicius gives the following account of Iamblichus' argument: motion *qua* extended belongs to quantity (*On Aristotle's Categories* 140.8–12). Activity cannot be its genus nor can motion itself be the genus of the categories action and passion, since it is constituted as a combination of both activity and passivity and is hence inferior to them (Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 302.5–308.3; Chiaradonna 2004: 132; Taormina 1997). This, however,

27 Hoffmann 1980 sees an inconsistency between the account in the commentary on the *Categories* and that on the *Physics*. Taormina 1999: 57–95 solves this inconsistency by reconstruction of a complex hierarchy of eternity and levels of time.

cannot be the whole picture. Iamblichus presumably insists on this point for polemical reasons and because he holds that the *Categories* primarily apply to the physical world, in line with what Ps-Archytas explicitly states regarding the dependent categories. Yet we have learned that also in the case of place and time he thought there were transcendent analogues. From other texts we know that Iamblichus admitted other forms of motion that transcend the opposition between activity and passivity. This is the case for the self-motion of the rational human soul and of souls of living things that are superior to humans.[28] In addition, he accepted motion that is unmoved, at the level of intellect.[29] In stating that self-motion is beyond the opposition between activity and passivity, Iamblichus picks up a suggestion made by Plotinus in his criticism of the Aristotelian doctrine of the categories.[30] The existence of the higher form of motion is also implied by Iamblichus' definition of time, which is based on Ps-Archytas. According to this definition, time is the number of a specific motion. Iamblichus explicates this as the primordial motion, of the nature of a principle. This motion is the cause of all other motions and is predicated homonomously of them. It is the motion that constitutes the substance of the soul, which Plato calls self-motion and Aristotle unmoved motion (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 350.10–34).

Iamblichus, moreover, appears to think that there is some agreement between Plato and Aristotle concerning the constitutive motion of the soul's essence, or at least that the disagreement is not complete: Plato claims it is self-moving while Aristotle *calls* it unmoved,[31] but that may be a mere terminological matter, as this motion is at any rate not a physical motion.[32] In the fragments of his *On the Soul*, Iamblichus criticizes a Peripatetic view according to which the soul is unmoved yet causative of motions.[33] He distinguishes between

28 Iamblichus, *Response to Porphyry* [*De mysteriis*] 1.3–4, especially 8.21–9.10 Saffrey-Segonds; cf. 12.6–14 Saffrey-Segonds. See Opsomer 2012: 268–71.

29 Iamblichus *apud* Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 2.251.4–5; Taormina and Piccione 2010: 368, n. 86; Opsomer 2012: 273.

30 Plotinus 6.1. [42] 19.23–26; 19.33–35; 22.10–19, with Opsomer 2012: 272. Iamblichus does not follow Plotinus in all respects: whereas the latter had argued against the Aristotelian distinction between motion (κίνησις) and activity (ἐνέργεια), Iamblichus upholds the distinction in his polemics and replies to Plotinus' arguments. See Plotinus 6.1. [42] 16; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 307.6–308.3.

31 See also Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 324.32–33.

32 For Iamblichus on self-motion and Aristotle's criticism of this concept, see Opsomer 2012.

33 Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.49, 370.14–372.2 (= Iamblichus, *On the Soul* Fr. 16 Finamore-Dillon = 16 Martone).

Peripatetics who conceive this motionlessness as inactivity and those who envisage a motionless activity (ἐνέργεια) which is the source of the motions of the living being and which is what Aristotle calls the unmoved entelechy of the soul. Iamblichus may have thought of Alexander of Aphrodisias as the main representative of the first group.[34] Alexander indeed claims that "soul as the form of the body [. . .] would be immovable in itself."[35] The second interpretation is probably held to represent Aristotle's own view. Aristotle indeed claims that the soul moves the body by its various thought processes (a combination of rational desire and intellection), not by physical motion.[36] Iamblichus rejects the first Peripatetic doctrine, but Aristotle's own view also does not escape criticism. Iamblichus does not find fault with the idea of a perfect activity, "the principle of unity and coherence and the stable cause of motions,"[37] but rather insists on the need to distinguish, as Plato did, between the activities proper to the soul itself and those that belong to the living being, that is, the compound of soul and body. As Iris Martone convincingly argues, this issue is part of a more general discussion regarding the relation of soul and body that is crystalized in the Aristotelian metaphor of the steersman and the ship (*On the Soul* 2.1, 413a9). This discussion, moreover, takes up a question debated by Plotinus in the same terms and with the same predecessors as interlocutors.[38] This whole treatment of the soul as unmoved entelechy is a good example of how Iamblichus, in his technical works that are not commentaries, includes discussions of Aristotelian and Peripatetic views (but also of many others, Stoic, for instance) for the sake of his development of his own Platonic position and does so as part of an on-going debate in which Alexander, Plotinus, and Porphyry are key players. The fragments from his *On the Soul* show Iamblichus moreover incorporating terminology, distinctions, and concepts borrowed from Aristotle. The role of Aristotelian ideas in Iamblichus' psychology and theory of intellect is undeniably an important aspect of his reception and critical

34 As pointed out by Finamore and Dillon 2002: 120.

35 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 21.22–25.

36 Aristotle, *On the Soul* 1.3, 406b24–25; 2.1, 413a5–10; 3.10, 433a9–10 and 434a16–21, cited and discussed by Festugière 1953: 200n1, Finamore and Dillon 2002: 120, and Martone 2014: 215.

37 Stobaeus, *Selections* 1.49, 370.20–21 (trans. Finamore-Dillon).

38 Martone 2014: 214–23. For the discussion in Plotinus, see especially 4.3. [27] 21; 4.7 [2]; 1.1 [53] 3.15–26. Plotinus argues in 4.7 [2] 8.5.16–23 that whoever wants to keep the Aristotelian term "entelechy" should understand it as a *separated* perfection of the body. Simplicius, quite possibly following Iamblichus, reflects this debate when he claims that Aristotle recognizes two types of entelechy: immanent and transcendent: *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 279.16–18; 378.20–32; 380.16–19; 381.2–18.

engagement with Aristotelian ideas. It falls outside the scope, however, of this modest contribution.

5 Concluding Remarks

These discussions of substance, place, time, and motion show that even when Iamblichus is engaging in "contemplative theory," he is not ranting like a divinely inspired madman, despite his reputation. His interpretations always rest on a scrupulous study of the text and a careful engagement with objections and other arguments by Porphyry, and also often Plotinus and others (for instance Stoics and earlier Peripatetics). The background of his account is his multi-layered Platonist metaphysical system, which was further refined through his exegetical work with Aristotle's texts. This can be seen, for instance, in his accounts of place, time, motion, and substance, which would have been much less sophisticated had they been based exclusively on Plato's dialogues. As I said in the beginning of this chapter, Iamblichus is often considered the second founder of Neoplatonism. Surely this is correct if one looks at the core doctrines, at the relation between philosophy and theology, at the philosophical style and at the way in which exegesis was used with a view to establishing a Platonic system. Does he have a similar pivotal role when it comes to the reception of Aristotle? Here a nuanced answer is required. The person who inaugurated a new era of Platonic commentators was certainly Porphyry, not Iamblichus. It should be added, however, that Porphyry pursued different aims and restricted the scope of his commentaries to the interpretation of Aristotle, without going into Platonic ontology. In this he differed from Iamblichus, who was convinced that Aristotle's works contained the essence of Plato's ontology, as Aristotle was an heir to the Pythagorean-Platonic tradition. In order to bring these nuggets of wisdom and hidden layers to light, he resorted to his famous intellective contemplation. Even if later commentators were not always prepared to go as far as Iamblichus, this style of commenting would certainly become the dominant one in the Athenian, and partly also in the Alexandrian, schools.[39]

39 The most Porphyrian, and hence the most Aristotelian, of the late ancient commentators were Themistius in the Greek, and Boethius in the Latin tradition. They were the minority.

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CHAPTER 18

Themistius

Arnaud Zucker

1 An Apparently Split Personality

Because of his paraphrases, Themistius (*ca.* AD 317–390) is regarded as one of the most trustworthy interpreters of Aristotle after Alexander of Aphrodisias. Still, compared to those of other interpreters, his personality and career resist easy categorization. The first difficulty concerns his social identity. He apparently led a double life, as a philosophical commentator on the one hand and a politician on the other. Critics have paid much attention to his "rhetorical" persona and have focused on the corresponding period of his intellectual production. Starting in 355, which marks the main turning point in his life, he was senator, proconsul (358), and urban prefect (384); he composed, throughout his career as imperial administrator, spokesman, and advocate for Constantinople, some thirty-four political or rhetorical orations, which Schenkl (1965) has divided into two main collections: political speeches (πολιτικοί) and private ones (ἰδιωτικοί). These were often occasional speeches, performed at ceremonies and other public occasions. Therefore they can be dated with precision, the only speeches before 345 being—most probably—*Orations* 1 and 24 (Schamp et al., in press). In the first half of his life, however, this native of Paphlagonia ran a school in Constantinople and was (between *ca.* 345 and 355) a renowned teacher. Most if not all of his philosophical production is likely to belong to this period, when he attracted many students and built a solid reputation that opened the gates of the power to him, even before the wide public success of his speeches and paraphrases. But there appears to be little connection between the two successive stages of his life.

2 An Unconventional Thinker

The second difficulty in categorizing Themistius is related to his philosophical commitments. While his exegetical work is devoted to Aristotle, Plato plays a much more significant role in his orations, especially his private speeches. He quotes or mentions almost all of Plato's dialogues and speeches, and his style also borrows formulas and references from Plato. This dual interest, which also affects his philosophical production, has led to opposing evaluations of his

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philosophical orientation. For some scholars, Themistius is a Neoplatonist;[1] for others, he is clearly an Aristotelian, "the last Peripatetic commentator," and even "a genuine follower of Aristotle."[2] This disagreement cannot be explained away by invoking the choice of the paraphrastic genre, which is supposed to leave little room for personal insights. Rather, it shows how puzzling and unusual Themistius' position is in the philosophical panorama of the fourth century AD.

Let us review his attitude toward Plato and Aristotle, and in general toward the Platonic and the Peripatetic traditions, in his extant writings. Plato's name occurs more than a hundred times in his orations and fifty times in the paraphrases, no less frequently than Aristotle; in his orations, Plato is described as θεῖος and θεσπέσιος, among other attributes.[3] The two philosophers, who are actually mentioned regularly side by side in his speeches, form an indissoluble pair.[4] Themistius, dubbed by Libanius (*Letter* 371) as a second Plato, recognizes the priority of Plato in many philosophical fields, logic included,[5] arguing that syllogism and apodictic reasoning are to be found already in Plato, but this is not a dogmatic *parti pris*. Themistius' position remains ambiguous in his philosophical works (the paraphrases), and he does not break the invariable rule among late commentators of trying to harmonize the two major philosophers as far as possible, following in this also a family tradition established by his father the philosopher Eugenius (*Oration* 20, 234c7–236a3), he either subordinates Plato to Aristotle (according to Penella 2000) or more conventionally the latter to the former (according to Hadot 2015). These alternatives indicate the difficulty the reader has in identifying Themistius' primary allegiance. Like other philosophers of late antiquity, he considers it impossible to address Aristotle and Plato separately (*Oration* 7, 93b6–8), and he adds that Aristotle, the initial focus of his father, indeed brought his father to the worship of Plato.[6] But this does not mean that Themistius was a

1 See Mahoney 1982; Sorabji 2000: 6; Hadot 2015.

2 Blumenthal 1990: 123; Glycophrydi-Leontsini 2008: 23; Sorabji 1990: 16.

3 See, e.g., *Orations* 2, 32b; 8, 107c; 23, 297b4; 26, 314d. Cf. Hadot 2015: 75.

4 Blumenthal (1990: 115) is right to note that Themistius is in fact more interested in the ethical (or "Socratic") Plato than in the metaphysical (or "Pythagorean") Plato, predominant in Neoplatonic concerns.

5 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 6.14–18. Philoponus (as well as Simplicius) sometimes makes explicit what remains implicit in Themistius or was present in one of his now lost pararaphrases.

6 "He would often first make a sacrifice to Aristotle and then end by worshiping Plato [. . .] He felt that Aristotle's philosophy is an excellent preliminary rite to Plato's frenzy" (Themistius, *Oration* 20, 235c1–d1).

fashionable Platonist, in tune with his philosophical fellows. Remarkably, he does not adhere to the esoteric and theurgic orientation of Iamblichus and many other Neoplatonists.[7] His paraphrases of the *Categories* is lost, but we learn from Boethius that he rejected the ascription to Archytas of the treatise *Concerning the Ten Categories*,[8] which everybody else—including, most notably, Iamblichus and Simplicius[9]—believed to be authentic and a major source regarding Aristotle's *Categories*. He does not take sides with Porphyry either, and although he names him only once he often disagrees with his doctrine. Moreover, he seems to have mainly read Plato's original texts and avoided Platonic scholasticism and Neoplatonic metaphysics.

No Neoplatonist philosopher is ever mentioned in the orations; even Maximus of Ephesus, contemporary author of commentaries on the *Categories* and the *Prior Analytics*, with whom he certainly was in contact and partly in rivalry,[10] is absent. In his paraphrases, alongside members of the old Academy (Speusippus, Xenocrates) and the early Peripatos (Eudemus, Theophrastus, and Strato), he only mentions Boethus, Andronicus, Sosigenes, Alexander, Porphyry, and Maximus. Some positions, especially those expressed in his paraphrases of Aristotle's *On the Soul* and *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*) on the active intellect, recall Plotinus. However, Themistius was not necessarily influenced by Plotinus, and nothing proves that he read Plotinus.

The presence of the Peripatetic tradition, including Alexander of Aphrodisias, is rather discrete in his paraphrases, and Themistius does not appear to be a "genuine" Peripatetic. He does not present himself, like Alexander, as an "ambassador" of Aristotle, disputing errant interpretations,[11] and he does not hesitate sometimes to take issue with Aristotle and his main advocate, Alexander.[12] In short, we cannot assume from the extant philosophical and rhetorical writings that he was a Platonist: he obviously devoted himself to explaining and highlighting Aristotelian works (and not Platonic texts), and there is no evidence that this was a part of a larger Platonic program. If he was not distinctly Aristotelian, he also resisted trends toward systematic read-

7 The intellectual distance between him and Emperor Julian, who was more attracted by the disciples of the Chaldean Oracles is probably due to this position.

8 Boethius, *On Aristotle's Categories* PL 64, 162A.

9 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 2.13–22.

10 See Ammonius, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 31.11–22; Badawi 1987: 181–194.

11 Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 2.4 (πρεσβεύομεν).

12 For instance, Themistius challenges the idea that everything that changes is divisible (*On Aristotle's Physics* 192.2–10), as Simplicius points out (*On Aristotle's Physics* 968.30–969.24; cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 6.4, 234b10).

ings of Plato and Aristotle. According to him, each philosophy counterbalanced the other, preventing total adherence to either (*Oration* 20, 235d2–6). He is not afraid to use irony when he speaks of the "obscure and ambiguous words (σκοτεινὰ καὶ λοξὰ ῥήματα) of the Aristotelian dialectic" (*Oration* 21, 247c6), ascribing to both philosophers benign errors (*Oration* 21, 258a). The intellectual independence and distance of this elusive thinker, contrasting with the common attitude among regular philosophers of worshipping classical masters, is rooted in the fact that Themistius felt he was first and foremost a general educator. His school in Constantinople was not a seat of Platonism or Aristotelianism, like the educational system of Marcus Aurelius, but permitted a propedeutic philosophical teaching with no particular affiliations. In a somewhat pompous formula, Constantius in appointing Themistius presents him as "the prophet (προφήτης) of the ancient and wise men and the hierophant of the innermost shrines and temples of philosophy" (*Letter of Constantius to the Senate* 20a).

3 A Pragmatic Teacher

The core of a commitment to philosophy is, in Themistius' eyes, engagement in public and political life. This approach was deemed a betrayal of the philosophical ideal in favor of a sophistic life. Themistius was criticized for devaluing philosophy by debasing it for the public, a reprimand from which he defends himself in *Oration* 26 (*On Speaking, or, How the Philosopher Should Speak*), where he mentions Aristotle as his philosophical model. His pragmatic conception of instruction leads him naturally to admire Aristotle's practical and political philosophy (*Oration* 34, [VI]), and to consider his philosophical itinerary as especially useful for public affairs,[13] even if this way of thinking means indeed following Plato as well (*Oration* 34, [XVI]). His commitment to public service could be seen as the culmination of his philosophical convictions.

4 Philosophical Production

His paraphrases secured Themistius a place in the history of the reception of Aristotle. He claims to continue a family tradition, asserting that his father

13 Although, on this particular point, Julian criticizes his interpretation of Aristotle (*To Themistius* 259b–260c).

Eugenianus and his stepfather were also very fond of Aristotle (*Oration* 23, 244b4–c9), and produced materials (*Oration* 20, 234d5–235a5) that Themistius would later incorporate into his commentaries (*Oration* 23, 294d1–3). In antiquity and beyond, he was known as the paraphraser, ὁ παραφραστής.[14] Note however that, while the word παράφρασις regularly appears in the manuscripts as part of the title of his works, Themistius himself never uses it. The following three paraphrases are still extant in Greek: *Posterior Analytics, Physics*, and *On the Soul*. Two more are preserved in Arabic-Hebrew and Hebrew-Latin translations: *On the Heavens* and *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*). However, Themistius can be credited with at least seven other paraphrases, documented either by Themistius himself or by later authors (including Simplicius and Philoponus): *Prior Analytics*,[15] *Categories*,[16] *Topics*,[17] *On the Senses*,[18] *Poetics, On Generation and Corruption*, and *Ethics*.[19] All these paraphrases are listed by Al-Nadīm in the *Kitāb al-Fihrist*. Although impressive, his overall engagement with Aristotle was no doubt selective. A considerable part of the Aristotelian corpus escaped his treatment: the whole of the zoological works, including the short treatises on natural philosophy (the so-called *Parva Naturalia*),[20] plus two works that one would have hardly expected a rhetorician to neglect: Aristotle's *Politics* and *Rhetoric*. He asserts that his paraphrases were written "in his youth,"[21] and claims that he did not think they could be useful to anyone other than himself, claiming with feigned humility to have made them only for himself and not to have allowed their diffusion;[22] but this hackneyed *topos* of the text published against the author's will dates back to Plato himself.[23]

14 Ammonius, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 31; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 68.7–9 and 188.30; Psellus, *Theology* 50.40.

15 *Oration* 21, 256a4–6.

16 *Oration* 21, 256a2–3; Themistius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 4.26.

17 Themistius, *On Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* 42.15–16.

18 Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 70.8; 77.27.

19 No Greek author ever mentions the three latter texts. Themistius probably knew and read the *Poetics*. See McMahon 1917: 15, 42.

20 On an alleged paraphrase of these treatises, see below.

21 *Oration* 23, 294d1: ἐμοὶ νέῳ ὄντι.

22 See Stegemann 1934: 16–52; Blumenthal 1979: 175.

23 Plato, *Parmenides* 128 D 8; Galen often laments on this dubious "robbery" (e.g. *The Order of My Own Books* [*Ord. Lib. Suor.*] XIX 50–51 K, and *My Own Books* [*Lib. Prop.*] XIX 8–11 K).

5 The "Inventor" of the Philosophical Paraphrase

In all probability, Themistius was not the first to write paraphrases of philosophical texts. However, his adoption and use of paraphrasis contributed to the redefinition of this exegetical method, which in the eyes of posterity became his own invention.[24] The extant evidence on predecessors is scarce. In his commentary on the *Categories*, Simplicius lists Andronicus of Rhodes among the ancient exegetes (παλαιοὶ ἐξηγηταί) of this Aristotelian work (*On Aristotle's Categories* 26.18). More importantly, Simplicius contrasts the exegetical activity of Andronicus and Boethus of Sidon. While the first *paraphrased* the *Categories*, the second offered a word-by-word analysis of this work. Moreover, in his commentary on Aristotle's *On the Heavens*, Simplicius refers to Nicolaus of Damascus and his work *On Aristotle's Philosophy*, and describes what Nicolaus does as a *paraphrasis* of the Aristotelian text.[25] We cannot rule out that Simplicus is anachronistically projecting back onto Andronicus and Nicolaus a method that was not yet current in the first century BC. Alternatively, his references to the existence of paraphrases of the Aristotelian text, when used in connection with Andronicus and Nicolaus, may point to an early stage in the exegetical process, a stage in which the interpreter occasionally rephrases a complex sentence in order to explicate it. Be that as it may, in connection with Themistius, the term "paraphrasis" is used in a stronger, indeed more specific, way: it describes the general and systematic procedure of restatement of an authoritative text.

If we want to make progress in our understanding of what a Themistian paraphrase is, we have to proceed on the basis of what Themistius *himself* says about his own exegetical method, since this term has a very broad, unsystematic, and often negative meaning in the literature.[26] It means, in general, "changing the wording while keeping the idea" (see, e.g., Aelius Theon, *Exercises* 15). In his first paraphrase (*On Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* 1.1–2.4), Themistius claims that it is overly ambitious and useless to write exhaustive exegetical

24 See Blumenthal 1979; Vanderspoel 1995: 228. Photius also alludes to exegetical works on Plato (ἐξηγετικοὶ πόνοι εἰς τὰ Πλατωνικά) of which there remains no trace, and commentaries (ὑπομνήματα), distinguished from the paraphrases. As for the περὶ ψυχῆς mentioned by Stobaeus (*Selections* 3.13.68.1), it is very unlikely that such distinct commentary ever existed (see Blumenthal 1979 *contra* Steel 1973).

25 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 398.36–37: "Nicolaus the Peripatetic, paraphrasing what is said here in his work *On the Philosophy of Aristotle* [. . .]."

26 See Zucker 2011.

commentaries (ἐξηγήσεις) of the traditional kind, as if the genre was collapsing under its own plethoric mass. The reason he does not want to compete with traditional commentaries is not that everything has already been said, but rather that they have failed, because of their excessive bulk, to provide access to what is essential in the Aristotelian text. His agenda is therefore to offer a new exegetical tool in order to help readers understand and memorize (τὴν ἀνάμνησιν) Aristotle's works. In his own words, his goal is to highlight the meaning (τὰ βουλήματα or τὸν νοῦν) of the Aristotelian text in a concise manner (σὺν τάχει) in keeping with the brevity of the philosopher himself (τῇ συντομίᾳ τοῦ φιλοσόφου). In fact, Themistius does not respect a generic frame called paraphrasis. Rather, he chooses to write a special kind of companion to Aristotle, restraining himself from commenting on the Aristotelian text at length. Indeed, he seems to conceive of his paraphrase as an alternative handbook for students in need of a recapitulation of the key points of the Aristotelian text, after a prior complete reading, but without presupposing any specific level of familiarity with this text. He wants thus to interpose his paraphrase between Aristotle and the numerous existing commentaries on his works, which often obscure and puzzle more than they illuminate.

Themistius justifies his engagement with Aristotle in the form of a companion by appealing to the usual brevity of speech (βραχυλογία) of the philosopher (*On Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* 1.7–9), and also to the fact that the arrangement of the main points in Aristotle's treatises has not been sorted out (ἡ τάξις τῶν κεφαλαίων οὐ διακέκριται). At times Themistius tries to improve on the Aristotelian text by rearranging the original sequence of arguments and assertions in order to achieve a clearer and more effective presentation of the original train of thought.[27] As for the clarity of his restatement, his traditional nickname transmitted by later sources is a sufficient witness. He is the person who speaks well or accurately, ὁ εὐφραδής.[28] To justify his effort to clarify

27 See Achard, 2008: 24–26. In his Latin translation of Themistius' paraphrasis of the treatise *On the Soul*, William of Moerbeke often draws attention to this peculiarity of Themistius' restatement of the original text with remarks such as the following one: "*Nota quod Themistius non continuat commentum huius partis ad partem premissam modo, sed interponit commentum partis sequentis et postea redibit ad istam partem* (Grabmann 1929: 65). To facilitate his presentation of the Aristotelian text, Themistius also frequently uses short sentences and dialogue form (e.g. *On Aristotle's Physics* 39.25–40.1; 147.16–23; 168.23–34), with countless interrogatives.

28 Sophonias, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 1.1–25; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 72.10, *On Aristotle's Categories* 1.10, *On Aristotle's Physics* 42.11, 968.30; Hesychius, *Lexicon* E 7278.

and elucidate the original text, which is the main goal of any paraphrase,[29] he invokes the classic theme that Aristotle deliberately cultivated obscurity (ἀσαφεία), and wrote texts "designed to be cryptic."

In comparison with later commentators, Themistius is undoubtedly less prone to digressions. He respects his original plan, which is "to extract the intention of what is written in his books, and report it quickly, in line with the conciseness of the philosopher, as best I could" (*On Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* 1.7–9). In order to see how far Themistius was able to achieve his goal, we may compare the original length of the Aristotelian work with the length of his paraphrasis.

Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* = 23,300 words; Themistius, *On Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* = 23,377 words

Aristotle, *Physics* = 55,000 words; Themistius, *On Aristotle's Physics* = 82,000 words

Aristotle, *On the Soul* = 21,000 words; Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* = 54,300 words

Obviously, Themistius does not strictly respect the original plan outlined, and the progressive modification of his exegetical method, in terms of both length (from 1:1 to 2.5:1) and attitude, helps us reconstruct the relative chronology of the three extant paraphrases.

The preliminary remarks offered at the outset of his paraphrase of the treatise *On the Soul* suggest that a more complex and ambitious agenda developed as Themistius progressed in his exegetical project. He aims not merely at "revealing the meaning" and "concentrating," but also at "scrutinizing," elaborating or even "improving on" the Aristotelian text.[30] The nature of the treatise *On the Soul* cannot be the only explanation for the mutation in the exegetical method, as Todd argues (2014: 4). Rather, Themistius seems to have come to understand the limits of his original plan. It is telling that he began expanding on the discursive parts of the Aristotelian text as early as his paraphrase of the *Physics*, which is likely to be the second in the series. In all probability, in writing his first paraphrase, Themistius was not fixing the formal rules of a new genre of exegesis but rather assessing the pedagogical goal of what he considered to be a modern exegesis.

29 E.g. Galen, *On Hippocrates' On Articulations* [*De Hipp. Artic. Comment.*] XVIIIa 748 K; Sophonias, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* Prol. 1. Cf. Eustathius, *On Homer's Iliad* 1.489.20.

30 Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 1.3–5: τὰ μὲν ἐκκαλύψαι, τοῖς δὲ συστῆναι, τοῖς δὲ ἐπιστῆσαι, τὰ δὲ—εἰ μὴ φορτικὸν εἰπεῖν—καὶ ἐξεργάσασθαι.

Between the paraphrase of the *Posterior Analytics* and that of the treatise *On the Soul*, other features changed, providing firm grounds for the conclusion that the exegetical method naturally evolved, becoming closer to traditional exegetical commentary. For example, critical assertions and interventions occur more often and the usual procedure of adopting the persona of Aristotle gives way to the commentator's voice, as if traditional exegesis was gradually superseding the paraphrast's agenda. The second sentence of his paraphrase of the treatise *On the Soul* proves this mutation is already underway: "He [sc. Aristotle] says at the beginning" [φησὶ δὲ ἀρχόμενος] (1.11); and Themistius often resorts to introductory formulas that would become routinized in Michael of Ephesus' paraphrases, such as "here is what Aristotle means."[31]

6 A Complex Formula

Later writers tend to adopt simplified conception of the paraphrastic method. Consider the case of Sophonias, a Byzantine monk who wrote paraphrases of Aristotle's works in the thirteenth century AD. At the beginning of his paraphrase of the treatise *On the Soul*, in dealing with the different methods of the commentators, Sophonias writes that the paraphrasts, whose model is precisely Themistius ("and later Psellus who imitates him"), are a special kind of exegetes: they "don the garment of Aristotle and employ [the technique of] speaking through his own mask, so that it would be easily taken in by the mind and the whole would be one and not divided into sections [. . .]" (*On Aristotle's On the Soul* 1.11–13). Sophonias subsequently never cites Aristotle by name, but this exegetical rule that he takes for granted is an artifact of his own theory and is not strictly observed by any other writer of paraphrases. Clearly, Sophonias takes paraphrase and commentary to be two separate forms of exegesis, the second consisting in "bringing forward a multitude of theoretical insights regarding each chapter, proof of their scholarly skill, their knowledge and their excellence in all regards" (*On Aristotle's On the Soul* 1.23–26). Simplicius shared this opinion. By his lights, Themistius only restated the Aristotelian text without hermeneutic insight.[32] In fact, the restatement of the Aristotelian text

31 See, for instance, *On Aristotle's Physics* 161.27: ἃ μὲν οὖν Ἀριστοτέλης φησί, ταῦτά ἐστιν. But even at that point the Themistian practice is not constant, and if he refers to Aristotle more frequently by name in *On Aristotle's Physics* (18 times) and *On Aristotle's On the Soul* (43, not counting the title mentions), he names Aristotle seven times in his paraphrase of the *Posterior Analytics* (7.17; 15.27; 20.16; 20.31; 21.7; 31.16; 59.10; and thrice in the prologue).

32 See Sophonias, *On Aristotle's Categories* 1.10–11: "directing all their efforts to change the wording in more explicit expressions, as did Themistius, the one who speaks well, and

attempted by Themistius takes into account the commentary tradition, drawing especially from the Peripatetic tradition. But he prefers sentence elucidation to magisterial synthesis and systematic assertions championing the unity of Aristotelian thought throughout the treatises. He integrates previous interpretations and uses Theophrastus, introducing quotations, especially in his paraphrase of the treatise *On the Soul* (see, for example, 102.25 on the ποιητικὸς νοῦς), and commenting on them (e.g. *On Aristotle's Physics* 197.4–8), aiming to offer a better understanding of ancient philosophy, including Platonic views (*On Aristotle's On the Soul* 108.35–109.3). He sometimes refers to ancient commentators (e.g. Andronicus, in *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 32.20), and often endorses Alexander of Aphrodisias,[33] but his debt to them is more important than apparent.[34] Moreover, even though Themistius generally avoids polemics and does not fancy systematizing, he sometimes criticizes his predecessors (e.g. Galen: *On Aristotle's Physics* 144.25), disagrees with previous exegesis, and speaks out against it (*On Aristotle's Physics* 120.20).

7 A New Exegetical Standard and its Cultural Impact

The Themistian paraphrases become an essential component of the Aristotelian tradition, and it is not uncommon among later Neoplatonist commentators such as Simplicius and Philoponus to reproduce the text of Aristotle, followed by the exegesis of Alexander of Aphrodisias and the paraphrase of Themistius, thus featuring the trio of Aristotelian voices. This is standard for Simplicius[35] and Philoponus.[36] The independence and the accuracy of his paraphrases turn them into common handbooks for all philosophers, routinely used as highly reliable in later commentaries and by various Neoplatonists. Generally speaking, the Neoplatonic commentators adopted Themistius and agreed with him

his like" (μόνην τὴν λέξιν ἐπὶ τὸ σαφέστερον μεταθεῖναι προθυμηθέντες ὥσπερ Θεμίστιός τε ὁ εὐφραδὴς καὶ εἴ τις ἄλλος τοιοῦτος).

33 Themistius rarely mentions Alexander of Aphrodisias, but Simplicius often explicitly points out this agreement (e.g. *On Aristotle's Physics* 70.32; 169.24; 400.1).

34 Themistius covers his sources as does his distant successor Michael of Ephesus, who cites Alexander of Aphrodisias only seven times in his work, although he plunders him massively.

35 E.g. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 176.32–33.

36 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1130.3–7 (a testimony from the lost *Against Aristotle. On the Eternity of the World* of Philoponus): "Having set forth Aristotle's text beforehand, and adding to it the entire explanation of Alexander and the paraphrase of Themistius, so that his works would thereby become more voluminous and impress the layman by their dimensions, he then adds his own objections to the argument."

more often than not, as witnesses Simplicius, who praises Themistius often and quotes him at length, and is pleased to report when the paraphrast sometimes backs Plato against Aristotle,[37] or when he exceptionally takes issue with Aristotle.[38]

Evidently, Themistius achieved his goal of offering concise digests, functional and unattached to a school doctrine, of the treatises he paraphrases. Photius (*Library* 74.52a16–17) calls his paraphrases abridged and handy transcriptions (μεταφράσεις εἰς τὸ χρήσιμον ἐπιτετμημένας), and Boethius a *breviarium*. The argumentation of Themistius is sometimes even preferred to the original due to its higher clarity.[39] For instance, as Boethius points it out,[40] Vettius Praetextatus, an aristocrat contemporary of Themistius, did not publish a Latin version of Aristotelian *Analytics* but rather of the Themistian paraphrase of that work.

The success of the Themistian paraphrase goes emphatically beyond the boundaries of antiquity. Most of the Byzantine commentators know and use his commentaries (Photius, Michael Psellus, John Italos, Eustratius, Michael of Ephesus, George Pachymeres, John Pediasimus, Theorodus Metochites), not only to offer a clearer and adequate rephrasing of Aristotelian sentences, but also for the explanations implied in his text. Like Themistius, none of these scholars was specifically Aristotelian, even Psellus, who knew the Themistian paraphrases very well and is described by Sophonias as a follower of Themistius: if he shares his pedagogical commitments (using, for example, diagrams in order to facilitate understanding), he considers his paraphrase of Aristotle's *On Interpretation* a commentary (ὑπομνήματα or σύγγραμμα).

Themistius' ability to remain close to the original text without imposing an overarching theory explains his large audience and wide reception. In spite of the evolution of his exegetical style over time, the authenticity of the five extant paraphrases is proven by their common openness and by the references in later commentaries. The following paraphrases have been falsely ascribed to him:

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37 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 69.9.

38 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On Physics* 765.31–766.19, quoting 23 lines of Themistius' paraphrase of the *Physics* [= Themistius, 162.11–163.7].

39 E.g. Philoponus, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 450.9: "Since [here] the Aristotle's *logoi* are too inductive (ἐπαγωγικώτεροι), it is better to use the *logos* of Themistius, which he gives in his commentary."

40 Boethius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation*, Praef. 1 = 2a, 3.5–8. Apparently Vettius Praetextus concealed his work as a translation of Themistius.

– A paraphrase of the short essays in natural philosophy (the so-called *Parva Naturalia*) is transmitted under his name. The manuscripts of this paraphrase can be divided into two groups: while the first group attributes the work to Sophonias, the second ascribes it to Themistius. The latter ascription is clearly wrong, for the work is based (and often *verbatim*) on the later commentary of Michael of Ephesus. Besides, Sophonias, who is the likely author of the paraphrase, is indebted to Themistius not only for his paraphrastic style but also for his conception of his exegetical method.[41]
– A paraphrase of the *Prior Analytics* that is "a compilation of the commentaries of Alexander of Aphrodisias and Philoponus"[42] is also transmitted under his name. In this case, Sophonias is no more than a possible candidate.[43]
– An epitome of Aristotle's zoological works preserved only in the Arabic tradition is ascribed to Themistius, but this text is probably an abridgment made from an annotated Arabic version of the Aristotelian works.[44]

Although they are not written by Themistius, the above works are further evidence that he remained an authoritative interpreter of Aristotle well beyond the boundaries of antiquity.

8 Philosophical Originality

The commentary on the treatise *On the Soul* is Themistius' masterwork, as well as his most influential paraphrase in antiquity and beyond. By his lights, both Aristotle and Plato agree in considering the soul an entelechy, with the passive intellect of the treatise *On the Soul* corresponding to the mortal soul of the *Timaeus*. Still, Themistius does not try to offer a Platonic reading of the Aristotelian doctrine of the soul.[45] He considers it in terms of powers

41 Although some scholars (notably, Michael Chase and Pierre-Marie Morel) still ascribe the text to Themistius, the position of Rose 1867 (followed by Wendland, Walzer, Coda, and Todd) is now indisputable.

42 Searby 2010: 1209.

43 Wallies 1894: v; Stegemann 1934: 1654.

44 Mattock 1976: 265. Despite the presence of the name "Thamasitus" in the heading of an Arabic manuscript containing a zoological collection, the supposed epitome of Aristotle's zoological works published in Badawi 1972 is unfounded.

45 He actually resists this reading even when Aristotle's assumptions are ambiguous, as in the case of the sailor analogy (Aristotle, *On the Soul* 2.1, 413a8). This analogy would be amenable to such a reading, since the sailor/ψυχή is separable from the ship/σῶμα.

(an Aristotelian approach) rather than of parts (a Platonic approach). Acting as a maverick untied to any school rather than an eclectic philosopher,[46] Themistius takes Aristotle's psychology in a spiritual direction (Hamelin 1953). The work contains many digressions, including an original and seminal doctrine of the existence of *three* intellects.[47] Beyond the difference between a *passive* intellect (παθητικὸς νοῦς) and an *active* and impassive intellect (ποιητικὸς ἀπαθὴς νοῦς), suggested by Aristotle in *On the Soul* 3.5, Themistius fastens on to an Aristotelian hint that there is a *potential* aspect of the intellect, and asserts that the intellect is in fact *threefold*.[48] Even more interesting is his account of the economy of this "trinitarian intellect."[49] While following the psychology of Alexander of Aphrodisias on other points,[50] Themistius departs from him on a momentous question, refusing to admit that the active intellect is identical with God and separate from the human (and corruptible) intellect (*On Aristotle's On the Soul* 102.30–103.19). He claims, on the contrary, that (a) the human intellect cannot be the passive intellect, (b) the active intellect is the specification of human form, and (c) only the passive intellect is subject to perishing.[51] The active intellect, which contains all forms and beings, is internal to the potential intellect ("which comes into existence only in the human soul")[52] and is united with it (99.13–18): "the active intellect is in the soul and it is like the most honorable part of the human soul" (103.4–5).[53] Diverging from the Aristotelian account of concept formation (3.31–4.11), Themistius states that

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Interestingly enough, Themistius presents this analogy as a preliminary and inaccurate sketch (see τύπῳ in Aristotle, *On the Soul* 2.1, 413a9); see Blumenthal 1990: 117.

46 See Glycophrydi-Leontsini 2008: 24.

47 Schroeder et al. 1990; Finamore 2010.

48 Note that this assertion appears also in the treatise *On Intellect* [*De intellectu*] (106.19) attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias. By contrast, in Alexander' treatise *On the Soul*, there are three *phases* of intellectual development, and not three kinds of intellect (Schroeder et al. 1990: 59).

49 See Ballériaux 1989; Schröder et al. 1990; Finamore 2010.

50 On the difference and analysis of potential and active intellect (ὁ δυνάμει νοῦς and ὁ ἐνεργείᾳ νοῦς), compare Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 98.12–100.10 and Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 81.20–84.24.

51 See 100.16–101.4, especially this explicit statement: "we, then, are the active intellect" (ἡμεῖς οὖν ὁ ποιητικὸς νοῦς: 100.37). This means that the potential intellect is also eternal.

52 Themistius, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 97.31–32.

53 On this point, his dissent from Aristotle remains implicit (cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 12.9, 1074b33–35).

the transcendent active intellect is in human beings as form in an immanent way, and the soul-related productive intellect guarantees human reasoning in this manner. Yet there is no reason, here as elsewhere, to think that Themistius is consciously and intentionally deviating from the Aristotelian position.[54]

Although he did not intend for his paraphrases to provide more than a simplified version of Aristotle's school treatises, Themistius offered various exegetical breaks with the commentary tradition and original views. Apart from the continuous popularity he enjoyed in Byzantine literature, the early Syriac-Arabic translations and the Latin reception (though interrupted between Boethius [sixth century AD] and Gerard of Cremona [twelfth century]) give evidence of the literary success and philosophical influence of his works.

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54 He relies principally for this "perverse interpretation" (Schroeder et al. 1990: 96) on Aristotle's *On the Soul* 1.4, 408b18–29 and 3.5, 430a14–25. Note that this doctrine has many consequences, especially for his conception of φαντασία (that he wants to be an independent faculty of the soul and identifies with the passive intellect) and αἴσθησις (see Todd 1981).

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CHAPTER 19

Syrianus and Proclus on Aristotle

Pieter d'Hoine

1 Introduction

That Plato and Aristotle agreed on most, if not all issues that really matter was a common supposition in post-Porphyrian Neoplatonism. From the Syrian Iamblichus, a pupil of Porphyry's, to the Alexandrian Ammonius in the late fifth and early sixth century AD, there were commentators who argued that even on the most obvious of disagreements between them, the existence of separate Forms, Plato and Aristotle did not hold conflicting views after all. It was often believed that when Aristotle appears to criticize Platonic Forms, his target is not Plato, but rather those who later distorted his views or misunderstood them. This does not mean that Plato and Aristotle were considered on an equal footing by the later Neoplatonic commentators, but rather that instead of being a rival, Aristotle was an ally of the Platonists and that therefore his works could and should be used in service of Platonism. Usually this also resulted in a very benign attitude toward Aristotle's failures as a Platonist and in rhetoric that focused on the common ground between Plato and Aristotle rather than on their divergences.

In this picture of the later Neoplatonic commentary tradition, the fifth-century Syrianus and Proclus stand out as dissidents—not because they did not believe in the utility of Aristotle for Platonism (their extant works suggest quite the contrary) but because they are no longer prepared to let Aristotle get away with his criticisms of Plato and his departures from Platonic (and Pythagorean) truth. Their attitude is no longer characterized by benign appraisal and tacit adaptation, but rather by critical appreciation. In what follows, I will first introduce their engagement with Aristotle by pointing to the crucial role that the latter played in the educational program of the Athenian school headed by Syrianus and Proclus in the fifth century AD. This will allow us to provide a brief survey of the works in which they dealt with Aristotle, and

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which for the most part sprang from this teaching context. Next, I will briefly go through some of the most remarkable aspects of their reception of Aristotle in the domains of logic, natural philosophy, and metaphysics.

2 Teachings and Writings on Aristotle

Both Syrianus and Proclus served as official headmasters of the Platonic school in Athens, which was refounded by a certain Plutarch ("of Athens," *ca.* AD 350–431/2) in the late fourth or early fifth century. The school, whose Platonism was very much indebted to the religious and theurgic concerns of Iamblichus, as well as to his Neopythagoreanizing program, claimed to be the true heir of Plato's Academy, and its directors bore the official title of *diadochoi*, namely successors (of Plato). Syrianus took over responsibility for the school upon Plutarch's demise around 431/2 if not earlier, and passed it on to Proclus (*ca.* AD 412–485) some five or six years later when he himself passed away. It was Syrianus who breathed fresh air into the school's approach to Aristotle, as Plutarch seems to have been inclined to defend a more radical harmony. There are good reasons to think that, of Syrianus and Proclus, the former was the more original, but since his literary production was eclipsed by that of Proclus, it was the latter whom posterity came to regard as the pinnacle of the school.

If our sources on Syrianus' life are scanty, we are relatively well-informed about Proclus, mainly thanks to the biography that his successor Marinus wrote in his honor. His *Life of Proclus* offers a vivid picture of life at the school and provides us with insight into its educational curriculum. Marinus (*Life* 8) tells us that Proclus, when he joined the school in Athens around the age of twenty, had already been trained in rhetoric in Alexandria. It was there that he had also started his philosophical education, with an otherwise unknown Olympiodorus,[1] who first introduced him to Aristotle. According to Marinus, it was not before long that Proclus became well-versed in Aristotle's logic (*Life* 9). Yet he soon became disappointed in his master's take on Aristotle, and we are told that this is the reason that he decided to leave Alexandria for Athens (*Life* 10.1–10). There Proclus was to meet Plutarch, who despite being already very advanced in age found the strength to read Plato's *Phaedo* and Aristotle's *On the Soul* with him. Proclus later continued his philosophical

1 Not to be confused with his more famous namesake, who was active in Alexandria in the sixth century; on the latter, I refer the reader to chapter 20 (Ammonius and the Alexandrian School).

training with Syrianus in a more systematic manner, following the educational program of the school:

> In less than two whole years, he [Proclus] read with him [Syrianus] the entire works of Aristotle, on logic, ethics, politics, physics, and the science of theology which transcends these. Once he had received sufficient direction in these, as in certain preliminary and lesser mysteries, Syrianus directed him into the mystagogy of Plato, in due sequence, and not, as the oracle says, "putting his foot across the threshold," and caused him to behold the truly divine rites in Plato's work, with the unclouded eyes of the soul and the spotless vision of the mind (Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 13.1–10; trans. Edwards slightly modified).

Aristotle was read as a preparation for Plato: the exegesis of Aristotle's works was not an end in itself, but served one's initiation into the higher Platonic truth. Marinus' insistence on the fact that the great masters were read in due order suggests that the curriculum had already been established. Indeed, we know from the sixth-century anonymous *Prolegomena to Plato* (26.13–44) that the reading order of Plato's dialogues, which comprised a total of twelve dialogues, divided into two cycles, had been canonized by Iamblichus. This Platonic curriculum cuminated in two dialogues, the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*, which were thought to contain Plato's most accomplished teachings on the natural world and the intelligible or divine realm respectively. After completing the curriculum, divine texts such as the *Orphic Rhapsodies* or the *Chaldean Oracles* could provide further instruction.

It is an educated guess that it was the same Iamblichus who standardized the Aristotelian curriculum which preceded the reading of Plato.[2] The division and reading order of Aristotle's works to which Marinus alludes in the quoted passage is known in more detail from later sources (cf. Hadot 1990: 63–93). After having acquired the necessary skills of reasoning through the study of Aristotle's *Organon* (*Categories, On Interpretation, Prior* and *Posterior Analytics*, and the *Topics*), a student would proceed to the reading of the ethical and political treatises from which the right moral disposition for further study could be gained. This would prepare her for the reading of the theoretical works, divided into physics or natural philosophy (*Physics, On Generation and Corruption, On the Heavens, Meteorology*, and *On the Soul*), and theology or metaphysics (Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, culminating in the theology of the self-thinking Intellect of book 12). The fixed reading order is a token of the school's conservatism, of which many other samples could be produced.

2 See O'Meara and Dillon 2008: 1–2.

One needs only to glance at the extant commentaries on the *Categories* from the sixth century—of which, quite exceptionally, enough samples are preserved to allow for detailed comparison—to see how profoundly these commentators were aware of belonging to a common exegetical tradition that often fell back to standardized interpretations, stock arguments, and preset topics that had to be discussed. In this context it is interesting to note that Proclus is recorded as having developed a list of ten topics to be dealt with before the study of Aristotle in class. This list was adopted by the later commentators on the *Categories*.[3]

By the fifth century AD, teachers habitually introduced their students to philosophy by reading and commenting on the great masters of the past. These lectures often resulted in written commentaries. Both Syrianus and Proclus must have lectured on all the Aristotelian treatises that were part of the canon, and some of their lectures circulated in written form as well. Unlike many of the Aristotelian commentaries of Simplicius and the later Alexandrians, however, those by Syrianus and Proclus are almost entirely lost. The only exception is a commentary on books 3, 4, 13, and 14 of the *Metaphysics* by Syrianus. Apart from that, a fair number of testimonies of their exegetical activity on other Aristotelian works have reached us through later authors. The fragmentary nature of this material does not always allow us to determine whether it derives from written commentaries or from oral teaching. With this caveat, we may note that there is some evidence of Syrianus' exegetical activity concerning the *Categories, On Interpretation, Prior Analytics, Physics, On the Heavens, On the Soul*, and *Metaphysics* 7 (*Zeta*).[4] For most of these works the evidence is so scarce that it is unlikely to stem from full-blown commentaries; only for the *Categories* can we be pretty sure that a written commentary by Syrianus was in circulation.[5]

We are not much better off for Proclus. It is likely that he wrote commentaries on the treatise *On Interpretation* and on the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics*, but these works are known only from later references and quotations.[6] Apart from these exegetical works, we are fortunate that there was preserved a

3 For the attribution of this list to Proclus, see Elias, *On Aristotle's Categories* 107.24–26. Elias writes that Proclus proposed it in his "common reading" (ἐν τῇ συναναγνώσει). This has often been taken to refer to a work entitled *Sunanagnôsis*, but recently it has been argued that the formula is more naturally taken to simply refer to Proclus' oral teaching practice: see Luna and Segonds 2012: 1555. For a discussion of the ten topics, see Hadot 1990: 21–160.

4 The texts are collected in Cardullo 1995 and 2000.

5 See Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 3.4–10.

6 For the evidence, see now Luna and Segonds 2012: 1555–1562; for the presumed commentary on *On Interpretation*, see also Hasnaoui 2003: 156–158.

systematic work called *Elements of Physics*, in which Proclus rendered Aristotle's theory of motion as expounded in *Physics* 6 and 8 and *On the Heavens* 1 in a highly systematic form, presented—almost *more geometrico*—in a sequence of definitions and theorems.[7] Furthermore, in a digression of his commentary on the *Physics* known as the *Corollary on Place* (*On Aristotle's Physics* 601.1–645.18; especially 611.10–619.2), Simplicius extensively quotes and discusses Proclus' views. Proclus' understanding of place as an immaterial, immobile, and indivisible body stands in a tradition of interpretations of Aristotle's doctrine in *Physics* 4.1–5. It has often been thought that Simplicius drew his information from a treatise *On Place*, mentioned by Proclus elsewhere (*On Plato's Republic* 2.199.22), but the information may just as well stem from other exegetical contexts. Finally, in our survey of works on Aristotle two polemical treatises should be mentioned. The first was probably entitled *Investigation of the Objections Raised by Aristotle against Plato's Timaeus* (ἐπίσκεψις τῶν πρὸς τὸν Πλάτωνος Τίμαιον ὑπ' Ἀριστοτέλους ἀντειρημένων).[8] The work is no longer extant, but it can be partly reconstructed on the basis of quotations by Philoponus and Simplicius. A second treatise, *Investigation of the Objections Raised by Aristotle in the Second Book of the Politics against Plato's Republic*, has been transmitted, in a mutilated form, as the closing essay of Proclus' commentary on the *Republic* (2.360.1–368.16). This rare document of later Neoplatonic engagement with Aristotle's practical philosophy is really a defense of Plato's conception of the unity of and the community within the ideal state, against Aristotle's attacks in the *Politics*.

3 Logic and Epistemology

A first clear sample of Syrianus' and Proclus' subordination of Aristotle to Plato can be found in their treatment of logic. From Hermias' commentary on the *Phaedrus* (55.24–27 Lucarini–Moreschini), which largely depends on Syrianus' lectures on that dialogue, we know that the Athenian Neoplatonists thought there was nothing particularly innovative in Aristotle's logic, as the Stagirite was only formalizing a method that was already employed by Plato. Nonetheless, there is no reason to doubt that Marinus was right in claiming that Proclus

7 Critical edition in Ritzenfeld 1912. For a discussion of its contents, see Nikulin 2003 and Opsomer 2009.

8 Such is the title referred to by Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World against Proclus* 31.10–11; Proclus himself mentions a slightly different title in his commentary on the *Timaeus* (2.279.3–4). For a reconstruction of the contents of this lost treatise, see Steel 2005.

was well-versed in Aristotelian logic. A most important contribution to formal logic is the doctrine that posterity would call the "canons of Proclus." The later commentators on Aristotle's *On Interpretation* credit Proclus with the first formulation of what later came to be known as the "rules of obversion," which describe the procedure for transforming propositions into logically equivalent propositions by means of negations. The introduction of these "canons" was occasioned by the discussion of *On Interpretation* 10, 20a20–23, where Aristotle provides examples of propositions that logically entail one another, mentioning for instance the proposition "No man is just," which entails "Every man is not-just." According to Ammonius, it was Proclus who first turned these examples into technical rules, most probably in his lost commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, on which Ammonius' commentary largely depends.[9] The doctrine would bear considerable fruit in the Byzantine and Arabic discussions of Aristotle's logic.

Despite his great interest in these doctrines, Proclus clearly subordinates Aristotelian logic to Platonic dialectic. He contrasts the dialectical methods that Plato presents in dialogues such as the *Phaedrus*, the *Republic*, and the *Sophist* as the supreme science of the Forms both with the "analytic method" of the Peripatetics (Aristotle's syllogistic, which has no connection to reality: *On Plato's Cratylus* 2.11–12) and with what Aristotle in the *Topics* calls "dialectic," namely a method to argue on both sides of any problem and to discover truth and falsity in received opinions (see *On Plato's Parmenides* 1.653.4–654.10 and 5.984.13–985.9; cf. Syrianus *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 104.30–31). For Proclus, the study of *Aristotle's* logic has no intrinsic value, but is merely instrumental in preparing us for the true, Platonic science of dialectic, in which the four traditional methods of definition, demonstration, division, and analysis disclose the intelligible structure of reality. Hence, Proclus anticipates the view that came to prevail among the later Alexandrian commentators, according to which logic is both an instrument and a part of philosophy.[10] Insofar as it consists in a merely formal method to construct and analyze arguments—as Aristotle's *Analytics* were taken to do—it is a mere instrument; yet to the extent that true (Platonic) dialectic applies logical schemes and deductive methods to reality, it is an integral part of philosophy—and the highest part at that. Hence Aristotle's logic may be useful for the novice philosopher, but

9 Ammonius acknowledges his debt to Proclus in *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 1.6–11. The 'canons' are discussed in Ammonius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 181.21–182.25 and are echoed in Stephanus, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 46.25–47.13 and 49.24–35. On this doctrine, see Diebler 2002 and Helmig forthcoming.

10 See Ammonius, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 10.36–11.21; cf. Helmig (forthcoming).

philosophy really gets started only when we begin to talk about *things* (i.e. intelligible reality), as Plato's dialectic does.

Syrianus' and Proclus' views on concept formation and universals were developed at least partly in response to Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*. Here we get a nice sample of their critical attitude toward Aristotle. Unlike previous commentators such as Iamblichus and Plutarch of Athens, who had attempted to harmonize Platonic recollection with Aristotle's view of concept acquisition, Syrianus and Proclus had little sympathy for Aristotle's empirical account of cognition. A good illustration of their attitude can be found in their doctrine of the three states of the universal, according to which universals exist either prior to the many particulars (πρὸ τῶν πολλῶν or *ante rem*), in them (ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς or *in re*), or derived from them (ἐπὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς or *post rem*).[11] Even though the later scholastics would use this doctrine in service of their attempts to reconcile Plato's theory of Forms (as *ante rem* universals) with Aristotle's empirically acquired concepts (*post rem* universals), Syrianus and Proclus employ it with polemical intentions. To be sure, for our Athenian Neoplatonists, Forms are strictly speaking not universals: even though they are *causes* of a plurality of things, they remain indivisible and transcendent and can therefore neither be properly defined nor universally predicated. It is only the images that the soul derives from the Forms, the psychic forms or *logoi*, which are the soul's proper objects of knowledge and can be articulated into universal concepts.[12] These psychic *logoi* are what one should properly identify with the *universals* "prior to the many." Since they have ontological priority over sensible particulars and are part of the causative chain resulting in the latter, the articulation of the soul's innate *logoi* allows us to gain proper knowledge of the sensible world, i.e. knowledge through its causes. Against the backdrop of this doctrine, Syrianus and Proclus often oppose the soul's innate *logoi* (which are *ante rem* universals and can only be acquired through recollection) and the empirically acquired concepts (universals *post rem*), whose derivative nature they expose by calling them "later-born" (ὑστερογενές).[13] These later-born concepts are what they think Aristotle is concerned with in *Posterior Analytics* 2.19, 100b3–5, where he

11 See Proclus, *On the First Book of Euclides' Elements* 50.16–51.6; cf. also *On Plato's Republic* 1.260.22–24. The distinction is employed by Syrianus in *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 163.4–13.

12 That the innate *logoi* of the soul are the proper objects of our knowledge and make discursive thinking possible is most forcefully argued in Proclus, *On Plato's Parmenides* 5.978.15–983.14.

13 The most elaborate discussion, explicitly directed against the Peripatetics, is found in Proclus, *On Plato's Parmenides* 4.892.17–895.1. For the opposition in Syrianus, see *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 82.27–28.

says that the soul acquires the principles of demonstration by induction. Such empirical concepts, however, cannot provide any basis for genuine knowledge, as they are derived from sensible particulars, which are ontologically deficient. Since for the Neoplatonists the cause is always greater than the effect, it is inconceivable that induction or abstraction would lead to anything but even more deficient images of sensible particulars. Syrianus and Proclus think that the second chapter of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* (1.2, 71b19–23) actually supports their view.[14] For there the Stagirite says that demonstrations set out from premises that are prior and explanatory (προτέρων καὶ αἰτίων) of the conclusion. Syrianus and Proclus find no fault in giving an ontological twist to Aristotle's words: they take him to mean that the starting-points of the demonstration must be *ontologically* prior to and *causally responsible* for the conclusion—and this, they argue, is incompatible with the view that Aristotle advocates in *Posterior Analytics* 2.19. Hence Aristotle is inconsistent and only the Platonic view stands: the true objects of knowledge are the soul's innate *logoi*, which are acquired through recollection. Only these give us access to the universals "prior to the many," which causally pre-contain all particulars that fall under them, just as in Neoplatonic logic the genus is superior and pre-contains all the species and their differentiae.[15] Proclus takes this anti-Aristotelian polemic a step further still when he argues that not only genuine knowledge, but even lower forms of cognition, such as the simple recognition of objects, actually require the recollection of *logoi*.[16] Hence the very notion of an empirically acquired concept is problematic, and there is no place for Aristotle's account of concept formation within a Platonic epistemology. For these reasons, it has been suggested that this is one of the domains where Proclus, unlike other Platonists, did not allow for any harmony between Plato and Aristotle.[17]

4 Natural Philosophy

Let us now turn to Syrianus' and Proclus' reception of Aristotle's physical doctrines. No commentary on any of Aristotle's physical works has come down to us from either Syrianus or Proclus, nor is it plausible that such commentaries

14 See Proclus, *On Plato's Parmenides* 3.796.10–797.2; 4.894.18–895.1. For Syrianus, see *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 161.4–36. Cf. Helmig 2012: 213–214.

15 Proclus, *On Plato's Parmenides* 5.981.15–17.

16 See Proclus' digression on opinion (*doxa*) in his *On Plato's Timaeus* (1.240.17–258.8), with the discussion of Helmig 2012: 232–261.

17 Helmig 2012: 340–341.

ever existed. Yet it would be wrong to infer from this that we are very much in the dark about our Neoplatonists' approach to Aristotle's physics. For we do have a commentary by Proclus on Plato's *Timaeus*, in which he embarks on a discussion about the merits of both Plato's and Aristotle's philosophy of nature. In addition, Proclus wrote a now-lost treatise called *Examination of Aristotle's Objections against the Timaeus*, which consisted of a survey of the main criticisms that Aristotle had directed against the *Timaeus*, particularly in the *Physics, On the Soul*, and *On the Heavens*, with extensive refutations of them by Proclus (see Steel 2005). There is no equivalent work extant for Syrianus, but it is beyond doubt that he was one of the main sources of Proclus and his take on Aristotle's natural philosophy must have been very similar.

Posterity has long regarded Aristotle as the natural philosopher *par excellence*, and we find no counterpart in Plato for Aristotle's comprehensive studies of animals, plants, and celestial bodies, nor for his systematic attempt to understand physical phenomena in terms of their immanent principles. Hence, it is less than surprising that later Platonic commentators eager to expose the great achievements and the unity of the ancient philosophical tradition often argued that despite—or rather thanks to—their difference in focus, the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle in these domains were largely compatible. Not so Proclus. Even though his own natural philosophy is no less imbued with Aristotelian concepts and doctrines, his construction of the narrative is very different, and his approach to Aristotle less merciful. In the opening pages of his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*, Proclus outlines a history of natural philosophy that is clearly constructed as a response to Aristotle's doxography of the four causes in *Metaphysics* 1.[18] Proclus begins his narrative by introducing a distinction between three parts of natural philosophy:

> Physical inquiry, to put it briefly, is divided into three, one part busying itself with matter and the material causes, the next including investigation of the form too and revealing that this is more properly a cause, and the third part demonstrating that these do not even have the role of causes (rather they play the role of supplementary requirements), postulating that the "causes" in the strict sense of natural occurrences are different: the productive, the paradigmatic, and the final (*On Plato's Timaeus* 1.2.1–9; trans. Tarrant).

Proclus further suggests that these three branches of natural inquiry (φυσιολογία) correspond to three types of natural philosophy, initiated by

18 Cf. Steel 2003: 179. I largely agree with Steel's analysis of the prologue.

different groups of philosophers—which he presents not in a chronological but in a hierarchical or systematic order. The first type of natural philosophy is typical of the physicists (φυσικοί) before Plato, i.e. the Presocratic philosophers whom both Aristotle in *Metaphysics* 1 and Plato in the *Phaedo* (96 A–99 C) credit with a materialistic explanation of natural phenomena. The second type is characteristic of a group of philosophers belonging to "those who have led the faction after Plato" ("the sharpest of them," *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.2.17). Their main business is the inquiry into form in addition to matter, thus "tracing back the origins of body to matter and form" (1.2.18–19). It is not difficult to recognize the allusion to Aristotle's hylomorphism in these lines. Notwithstanding the major advance that this kind of physics represents with respect to that of the Presocratics, it falls short of a systematic and comprehensive science of nature. For such a science should not limit itself to the immanent causes of the sensible world, matter and form, which are nothing but accessory causes (συναίτια). Only in the tradition inaugurated by the Pythagoreans and brought to perfection by Plato[19] could the genuine, i.e. transcendent, causes of nature be fully appreciated. The point is that there is nothing particularly innovative in Aristotle's hylomorphism, for Plato had already discussed matter and form in the *Timaeus*, where he says that the likenesses of the Forms enter and leave the receptacle (50 C; 52 A). Yet in addition to these, Plato also introduced his readers to the genuine causes on which matter and (immanent) form depend: the productive cause (the Demiurge), the paradigmatic cause (the Forms or the intelligible Living Being which provides the model for the Demiurge's imposition of order), and the final cause (the Good). It is quite ironic to see how Aristotle's construction of the history of causal explanation is entirely reversed by Proclus. Not Aristotle but Plato was the first to come up with a comprehensive and systematic doctrine. We no longer get a teleological narrative culminating in Aristotle's pioneering account of the four causes—as Aristotle himself suggests in *Metaphysics* 1. Rather, we are given an archeology or genealogy according to which the highest peak of wisdom attained by Plato and his presumed Pythagorean predecessors subsequently became obscured by later competitors such as Aristotle.

The doctrine of the five causes was already well-established before Proclus. In Seneca (*ca.* AD 4–65), for instance, we find a similarly anachronistic account, according to which Plato "added" a fifth cause, the *exemplar*, to Aristotle's

19 Proclus believes that the Ps.-Pythagorean treatise *On the Nature of the World and the Soul*, which in antiquity was attributed to the Pythagorean Timaeus of Locri, but which is a fraud of the first century BC or AD based on Plato's *Timaeus*, was actually Plato's source (see *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.1.8–16).

system of the four causes (*Letters* 65.7). If we may rely on Simplicius (*On Aristotle's Physics* 10.25–11.5), Porphyry even extended this list with a sixth cause: the instrumental cause, which transmits the causal efficacy of the transcendent causes to the lower realms. This doctrine can be easily put at the service of a harmonizing agenda, as for instance Simplicius and Philoponus testify in their commentaries on the *Physics*. Yet Proclus frames the story differently. To his mind, the presumed Platonic provenance of the six causes provides further proof of Plato's superiority over Aristotle. But how can Proclus possibly say that Aristotle limited himself in his natural inquiry to the investigation of form and matter only? The objection needs to be qualified. Proclus' point is that Aristotle gives too much weight to the immanent causes (form and matter), while he has an inadequate grasp of the efficient and the final cause and fails altogether to acknowledge the need for the paradigmatic cause. Proclus attempts to expose Aristotle as a failed Platonist—a pupil who tries to emulate his master without having assimilated his thought properly.[20]

Let us try to make the case for the productive cause (ποιητικόν). Aristotle did of course accept what the later tradition has called the efficient cause, i.e. that which initiates the motion or change in sensible bodies. In natural organisms, which carry their own principle of motion within, he identified this cause with nature. Yet Aristotle's view is entirely inadequate for Proclus, who, in line with Platonic tradition, is in search of a truly productive cause—i.e. a cause not merely of motion but of existence. Hence nature, according to Proclus, must be endowed with the *logoi* of all natural beings. Nature is for Proclus not merely an internal principle of motion operating autonomously, but rather an instrument that transmits the truly productive power of the Demiurge to natural bodies by investing them with creative *logoi* from within.[21] Nature, which is superior to yet inseparable from body, to the extent that it is its proximate cause, is subordinate to Soul and (the demiurgic) Intellect, from which its *logoi* derive as "images" of the Forms. In his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus* (1.2.24–29), Proclus also criticizes Aristotle for having restricted efficient causality to the sublunary realm. According to Aristotle the heavenly bodies, which are immune to generation and corruption, are only subject to an everlasting circular motion instilled in them by the first Unmoved Mover. Proclus takes issue with this view, as he thinks Aristotle thus left the heavenly bodies

20 According to Proclus even the structure of Aristotle's *Physics* is copied from the *Timaeus*: see *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.6.21–7.16. The idea that Aristotle's natural philosophy derives from the *Timaeus* is expressed in Syrianus, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 175.10–11; for the idea that Aristotle emulates with Plato, see also *On Plato's Timaeus* 3.49.16–18 and 323.31–324.1.

21 See Proclus' digression on nature in *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.9.25–12.26.

without a productive cause, i.e. a cause that could account for their existence. Proclus takes pleasure in claiming that such a view must lead to absurdities: for either it implies that the heavens have come about by chance, or that they are causes of their own existence—two options Proclus has no difficulty refuting. For Proclus this confirms that Intellect, which he identifies with the Platonic Demiurge, must be characterized first and foremost as a productive cause of all physical reality. Moreover, since the Demiurge can only be productive insofar as he takes recourse to preexisting models, Aristotle is equally wrong in denying the existence of the paradigmatic causes or the Forms, of which the forms in matter are merely images. He fails to see that his system of immanent causes is bound to go astray if it is not warranted by eternal paradigms. Finally, we will see that Proclus also criticizes Aristotle for wrongly identifying the final cause with Intellect or the first Unmoved Mover (see below 390–391). Hence, his understanding of the three genuine causes is entirely inadequate.

This need not mean that Aristotle did not make any contribution to natural philosophy. According to Proclus, it is of course true that the Stagirite investigated many aspects of the natural world in greater detail than anyone else—astronomical phenomena, for instance, and biological life. Yet in the first case he took his study far beyond what was needed, and in the second he indulged so much in the inquiry of material aspects that he almost lost track even of the form (*On Plato's Timaeus* 1.7.6–16). In short, this is not philosophy, but pseudo-scientific pedantry. For Proclus, the philosopher of nature should never disregard the theological perspective on nature, for an adequate explanation of the physical world must take into consideration the intelligible causes on which nature depends.

In the *Elements of Physics*, Proclus' attitude to Aristotle is more benevolent. Proclus here takes pains to summarize and systematize Aristotle's doctrine of motion in *Physics* 6 and 8, and *On the Heavens* 1, into a set of definitions and theorems, connecting them with short demonstrations. Even though Proclus smuggles in some views of his own, he usually stays quite close to Aristotle's doctrines. Thus there is no reason to believe that he did not endorse the main lines of Aristotle's theory of motion.[22] The second and last book of the *Elements of Physics* culminates—as does *Physics* 8—in the demonstration of the existence of a first, indivisible, and unmoved mover as the cause of the circular motion of the heavens. This fits Proclus' theological view of natural philosophy well, and he abstains here from any criticism of Aristotle's conception of this first principle. It seems, then, that Proclus is more prepared here to go along with Aristotle, but there need not be any contradiction with his approach to

22 Cf. Opsomer 2009: 193.

Aristotle's *Physics* elsewhere, for Proclus' theological or metaphysical critique really only starts where Aristotle's physics lets off. The specific purpose of the work and its highly systematic form do not allow for any explicit criticism from a metaphysical point of view.

5 Metaphysics

We possess a commentary by Syrianus on books 3, 4, 13, and 14 of the *Metaphysics*. A number of formal elements suggest that we actually have three sets of more or less independently composed comments, on 3, 4, and 13–14 respectively. Not only are the styles of these three commentaries very different from one another, but each set of comments also starts with an introduction and ends with a conclusion, so as to give the impression of a more or less self-contained whole. These formal elements also suggest that Syrianus need not have commented on the entire *Metaphysics*.[23]

Just as Aristotle's *Physics* was the counterpart to Plato's natural inquiry in the *Timaeus*, we can consider Aristotle's *Metaphysics* as the counterpart to Plato's most accomplished theological dialogue, namely the *Parmenides*. Like the *Physics*, the *Metaphysics* was useful for the Platonist if handled with caution. It crowned the Aristotelian part of the Neoplatonic curriculum and was often referred to as Aristotle's theological treatise (θεολογικὴ πραγματεία; e.g. *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 80.17). This suggests that the theology of the self-thinking intellect of *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*) was regarded as the culmination of the entire work. It was this doctrine that rendered the work useful as an introduction to genuine Platonic-Pythagorean theology, as it made a convincing case for the existence of an immaterial first substance. Yet the main strength of the work also turned out to be its prime weakness, as the work's main flaws consist precisely of Aristotle's deficient understanding of first principles and his attack on the Platonic and Pythagorean alternatives. Therefore, the *Metaphysics* could be used in the Platonic curriculum only if accompanied by a user's manual that tells the reader what is fitting in the work and where Aristotle goes astray. It seems that one of the main aims of Syrianus' commentary was precisely to provide such a manual (cf. O'Meara and Dillon 2008: 5).

23 Cf. O'Meara and Dillon 2008: 3–5; Frede 2009: 40. The work may however have extended somewhat beyond its actual limits, as we do have some fragments that testify to Syrianus' exegesis of book 7: see Asclepius, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 433.9–436.6 and 450.22–28. It is not clear, however, whether or not these comments stem from a written commentary. For an analysis of these passages, see Cardullo 1993.

There are, however, considerable differences between the different books of Syrianus' comments. In his exegesis of books 3 and 4, a rather detached or impartial approach seems to prevail, and Syrianus' criticism of Aristotle doesn't go beyond what one would expect from a convinced Platonist. The reason for this attitude is to be found in the subject matter of these books. In *Metaphysics* 3 Aristotle presents a series of *aporiai* concerning the project of a first philosophy that he had introduced in *Metaphysics* 1. The puzzles are subsequently discussed in a dialectical manner, providing opposing answers to each problem. Syrianus is happy to comment on each problem by guiding the reader to the Platonic-Pythagorean solution. In *Metaphysics* 4 Aristotle provides a first, positive outline of the project. He endeavors to delineate the scope of first philosophy as a unique science concerned with being *qua* being, discussing also how the other sciences are related to it and why it comprises the study of the most general principles of demonstration. Syrianus refers the reader to Alexander's commentary for a detailed exegesis of the text and limits himself to a summarizing paraphrase with explanations of those issues that could cause trouble for the Platonist (see *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 54.11–15). In this context, Syrianus finds the opportunity to clarify how Aristotle's science of being *qua* being is related to Plato's discussion, in *Republic* 6–7, of dialectic as the supreme science concerned with Forms (55.17–33).[24] This amounts to a subtle appropriation of Aristotle's project for Platonic purposes. Syrianus identifies the two, explaining that the science of being *qua* being must investigate what is primarily being, and that this is of course the Platonic Forms (58.13–14). Just as Aristotle will say that all being according to the other categories is called being with reference to one thing, namely substance as the primary sense of being (*Metaphysics* 4.2), so Syrianus will argue that first philosophy is concerned with the Forms as primary beings, while the objects of the other sciences are derived from and have reference to the Forms. Indeed, first philosophy is concerned with intelligible substance, while mathematics deals with intermediate substance (projections of the forms in the soul), and physics with sensible substance (*On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 58.13–15; 61.17–22). The objects studied by the sciences thus depend for their being on the Forms. Moreover, since they can be ranked as prior or posterior to one another, the sciences themselves constitute a hierarchy crowned by Platonic dialectic. One easily sees how Syrianus here manages to adopt Aristotle's project while at the same time subordinating it to Plato's.

24 For Syrianus' conception of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, see O'Meara and Dillon 2008: 5–8, and Frede 2009: 45–56.

The tone is entirely different in Syrianus' comments on books 13 and 14, where Aristotle launches a straightforward attack on the Platonic and Pythagorean doctrines of Forms, principles, and mathematics. Syrianus feels no temptation to moderate Aristotle's criticisms or to explain them away, but instead chooses to counter them harshly. He justifies his approach in a prologue that is noteworthy because of its programmatic character.[25] Syrianus sets out with a *captatio benevolentiae* in which he claims not to belong to those who take pleasure in disagreeing with Aristotle, nor to those who appreciate him only superficially. Instead, he confesses to admiring Aristotle's logic, ethics, and physics, and reserves his highest praise for the argumentative rigor of the *Metaphysics*, as well as for a number of doctrines developed in it: he mentions Aristotle's account of forms in matter and definitions, and his doctrine of the divine, immobile, and transcendent causes of the universe (80.10–11). For these achievements, Syrianus says, Aristotle could rightly be called a benefactor of mankind (εὐεργετὴν τοῦ τῶν ἀνθρώπων βίου; 80.14). Even though this *captatio* is undeniably part of a rhetorical strategy, the compliments need not be less sincere for that. For we have already seen that Aristotle's logic was, with certain qualifications, warmly welcomed by both Syrianus and Proclus, that his hylomorphism was endorsed as an adequate account of sensible substance (even if this account was neither ultimate nor original), and that the theology of *Metaphysics* 12 could be integrated into a Platonic metaphysics. Thus, despite their often very critical attitude, both Syrianus and Proclus do indeed have a considerable debt to pay to Aristotle. Yet immediately afterwards, Syrianus introduces the purpose of his commentary on books 13 and 14:

> However, since it is the fact that, for whatever reasons, both in other parts of his theological treatise and especially in the last two books, 13 and 14, he has indulged in a good deal of criticism of the first principles of the Pythagoreans and the Platonists, while never presenting any adequate justification for his position, and in many instances, if one may state the truth frankly, not even meeting them on their own ground, but rather basing his objections on hypotheses propounded by himself, it seemed reasonable, in fairness to the more unsophisticated students, lest, under the influence of the well-deserved reputation of the man, they be seduced into contempt for divine realities and the inspired philosophy of the ancients, to subject his remarks, to the best of our ability, to a judicious and impartial examination, and to demonstrate that the doctrines

25 Syrianus, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 80.4–81.6. Saffrey 1987 was the first to draw attention to the programmatic character of this prologue; cf. also Helmig 2009: 357–361.

> of Pythagoras and Plato about the first principles remain free of disproof or refutation [...] (*On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 80.16–27; trans. Dillon and O'Meara).

Aristotle's attacks on the principles of Platonic-Pythagorean philosophy are, according to Syrianus, unfair and mischievous. The commentator will expose Aristotle's misunderstandings of the genuine theory of Forms, the number theory of Plato and the Pythagoreans, and their teachings about the One, the monad, and the dyad. Thus against Aristotle's denial of the separate existence of mathematical objects, he takes the defense of the Platonic-Pythagorean doctrine of the intermediate status of mathematicals; the objections against Plato's theory of Forms are met with short and sharp rebuttals; and the attacks on the Platonic and Pythagorean theories of mathematical number and Form numbers provide Syrianus with a pretext to instruct Aristotle about the true meaning of the doctrine which the latter apparently failed to understand. Notwithstanding his great merits in many fields of philosophy, Aristotle definitely crosses a line when he assaults the very principles of Plato and the Pythagoreans, and he therefore needs to be refuted. Indeed, Syrianus' aim in his comments on books 13 and 14 is not so much to explain what Aristotle's criticism is actually about, but rather to dismiss it altogether as being either sophistical or the result of plain misunderstanding. Syrianus spends most of his efforts in recommending what he considers to be the true Platonic-Pythagorean doctrines, and he is often happy to point out the contradictions between Aristotle's arguments and assumptions he makes elsewhere.[26] Providing such a refutation is in the interest of the novice Platonist, who could be easily led astray without such an "antidotum."[27] Syrianus himself suggests that for a mere explanation of the text one could profitably consult Alexander's commentary on the *Metaphysics*—and the many allusions to this commentary show that it was probably read along with Aristotle's text in class. It is only when the project of Platonic theology is in peril that the teacher has the duty to set things right. This is yet another reason why it is implausible that Syrianus would have commented on the entire *Metaphysics*, as for many parts of the *Metaphysics* Alexander's commentary would have sufficed for educational purposes. The rebuttal of his attack on Platonic and Pythagorean principles was simply the price that Aristotle had to pay to secure his position in the Neoplatonic curriculum.

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26 For the different strategies used by Syrianus in his criticism of Aristotle, see Dillon and O'Meara 2006: 11–20.

27 The term is used in O'Meara and Dillon 2008: 4.

Let me illustrate the later Neoplatonists' approach to the *Metaphysics* with an example that allows us to reconnect with Proclus, namely the reception of Aristotle's doctrine of Intellect as introduced in *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*). Even though the books commented on by Syrianus are not immediately concerned with this doctrine, it does pop up time and again in his exegesis of particular passages. In the prologue to his comments on books 13 and 14, we have seen that his theory of divine, unmoved causes is one of the doctrines Aristotle gets explicit credit for from Syrianus. This, however, does not mean that Syrianus and Proclus unreservedly accept the doctrine of *Metaphysics* 12.7 about the existence of a first Unmoved Mover, which, being involved in eternal contemplation of itself, moves everything as an object of desire. In fact, they raise a number of objections to this theory.[28] Both Syrianus and Proclus take Aristotle to mean that Intellect, which is the first principle of reality, is (merely) a final cause of motion, and then find fault with him for that reason. In *On Plato's Parmenides* (3.788.8–19; cf. *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.267.4–12), for instance, Proclus objects that nothing can be a final cause without being a productive cause as well. A great deal is packed into this objection. First, Proclus assumes the Neoplatonic principle that a being can only reverse on the cause from which it proceeds (*Elements of Theology* 34). Thus, if Intellect is the ultimate object of desire for all beings, it should also be the cause from which they derive. Hence, it should not only be a final cause, but also an efficient cause—or its Neoplatonic counterpart: a productive cause. This leads to a second criticism. Aristotle's Intellect cannot merely be an unmoved *mover*—a cause of motion—but must also be a cause of *existence*—a productive cause in the Neoplatonic sense. This further implies that Intellect must have access to the Forms—and hence that the Forms too must exist. Proclus makes his case on the basis of Aristotle's characterization of the first unmoved mover as self-thinking thought (*On Plato's Parmenides* 3.790.5–791.20). For if Intellect is essentially a productive cause, then its self-knowledge must comprise a contemplation of the intelligible paradigms of all that it produces. Hence, it should have access to the Forms. Along these lines, Proclus attributes to Aristotle's Intellect the features of the Platonic Demiurge: it is the supreme productive cause of the cosmos and the living beings it comprehends, which are modelled on the transcendent Forms that Intellect contemplates. Finally, Proclus has one further and fatal objection. Aristotle's main aberration consists in his acceptance of Intellect as the highest principle. In his *Platonic Theology* (2.4, 33.19–22), Proclus disqualifies such a view as being a Peripatetic inno-

28 For these objections, see Steel 1987 on Proclus. For Syrianus, see *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 10.32–11.5; 117.28–32.

vation (Περιπατετικὴ καινοτομία). For the first principle of all things and the supreme final cause must be the One-Good, which transcends even Being. Like Plotinus, Proclus also makes a case against Aristotle by arguing that Intellect, since it implies a duality between thinking and its object, must be subordinate to an even higher, and most unified principle.[29]

6 Conclusion

It is time to take stock. As we have seen, for both Syrianus and Proclus Aristotle has a crucial place in the educational curriculum of the Platonist and they greatly appreciate a number of his doctrines in logic, physics, and the science of theology. However, they find Aristotle especially fit to be read *before* Plato, as the former falls short of his master on nearly all counts. Aristotle's logic is useful, but only as an introduction to true Platonic dialectic. Aristotle's hylomorphic account of the natural world is fundamentally correct, but fails to grasp the genuine, transcendent causes of the sensible realm. Finally, Aristotle's understanding of first philosophy as the study of being as such and his introduction of Intellect as a transcendent and final cause are great achievements, but in order for them to be made philosophically rewarding they have to be integrated into a larger Platonic-Pythagorean framework. There are even domains where Aristotle is irremediably wrong, for instance in his account of concept formation, which does not allow for harmonization with Plato. For both Syrianus and Proclus, Plato is the standard against which Aristotle's failures and successes can be measured. Despite their often harsh polemics, even when they disagree with the Stagirite, they usually find him worthy of a detailed refutation.

I have so far restrained from making any explicit distinction between Syrianus' reception of Aristotle and Proclus'. I do in fact believe that our sources do not really allow us to make any sharp contrast between their approaches.[30] It is generally acknowledged that Proclus' extant commentaries owe much more to Syrianus than we will ever be able to assess. Moreover, since the extant works of Syrianus and Proclus stem from very different exegetical contexts, no strong conclusions can be drawn from occasional differences in tone or strategy. In those cases where we have material to compare Proclus' and Syrianus' engagements with Aristotle—such as for instance for their views on concept

29 See Proclus, *Elements of Theology* 20, pp. 22.24–25. For Plotinus, see e.g. *Enneads* 5.1 [10] 9.7–12; 5.6 [24] 3.22–25; 6.7 [38] 37.18–24.

30 For attempts to make such a distinction, see Saffrey 1987: 208–209, Helmig 2009: 378–379, Hadot 2015: 124–125.

formation, on the dependence of Aristotle's *Physics* on the *Timaeus*, and on Intellect as a first cause—their views usually converge.

In all likelihood, it was Syrianus who introduced the more critical attitude to Aristotle, which was then to be adopted by Proclus, to the Athenian school of Plutarch. But this strategy did not detract from their great debt to and appreciation for Aristotle. Despite their explicit opposition to the Stagirite, one should also take into account the conceptual tools that Syrianus and Proclus borrow from him, the common ground on which they move, and the Aristotelianism that is often implicit in their exegesis of Plato. The bottom line for their attitude seems to have been that Aristotle always deserved close attention and could often be met with approval, but had to be plainly criticized whenever he became a threat to the Platonic-Pythagorean wisdom. That is what most distinguished the approach of Syrianus and Proclus from more radical harmonizers such as Ammonius and Simplicius. Rather than trying to dissolve the apparent contradictions between Plato and Aristotle or to argue that Aristotle's assumptions show that he accepted the Platonic position *by implication* (e.g. concerning the efficient or productive causality of Intellect, as Ammonius seems to have argued in a treatise devoted to that topic), Syrianus and Proclus choose a different strategy. They openly criticize Aristotle for not understanding where his own Platonic assumptions should have brought him.

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CHAPTER 20

Ammonius and the Alexandrian School

Michael Griffin

1 Introduction

In AD 415, the Alexandrian philosophical establishment was shaken by the murder of a widely respected public philosopher, Hypatia,[1] in an atmosphere perceived to be growingly hostile to pagan intellectualism. Cultural and rhetorical teaching proceeded normally, but the best philosophy students left Alexandria for Athens, where Plutarch and Syrianus helmed a resurgent Platonic Academy. Syrianus' personal connections in Alexandria, coupled with Athens' reputation as a safe haven for Hellenic religious and philosophical activity in the tradition of Iamblichus, may have helped to draw students to the Greek mainland. When Syrianus' Alexandrian pupils returned home from Athens later in the century, they brought his philosophical outlook with them, together with a revitalized Hellenic piety that encouraged religious experimentation among Alexandria's student body.[2]

Alexandria appointed one of Syrianus' most talented pupils, Hermeias, to a publicly funded chair in philosophy. His second son Ammonius (*ca.* 435/45–517/26), who inherited his chair, was exceptionally influential. Ammonius trained many of the most important philosophers of the following generation, including Damascius, Simplicius, and John Philoponus. Ammonius was succeeded (indirectly) by Olympiodorus (*ca.* 495/505–after 565), who may have been the last Alexandrian teacher to profess philosophy without at least a nominal commitment to Christianity. His own pupils, active in the later sixth and early seventh centuries, had Christian names; but they kept their philosophy and their Christianity broadly separate, and likely preserved the school's pedagogical tradition into the seventh century. Copies of the school's lectures

* I am indebted to Andrea Falcon, Richard Sorabji, and Mossman Roueché for valuable criticism of earlier drafts of this chapter; its remaining faults are solely my responsibility.

1 On the shifting intellectual climate of the fourth and fifth centuries, see for example Watts 2006: 169–231. For the Neoplatonic tradition on Hypatia, see Damascius, *Life of Isidore* [*Philosophical History*]43 A–E (Athanassiadi 1999).

2 For an overview of these early years, see for example Westerink 1990, Blank 2010. For the religious atmosphere of the school, see Watts 2010: 23–88; Hoffmann 2006.

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and commentaries resurface briefly in the "philosophical collection" of the tenth century, and many would reach Italy in the fifteenth century.[3]

This chapter presents the Alexandrian school as maintaining the basic philosophical positions and curricula developed by Syrianus and Proclus, with few amendments.[4] Following Ammonius, the school pays especially careful attention to Aristotle. It endorses the three Neoplatonic hypostases One, Intellect, and Soul. Even positions contrary to contemporary Christian orthodoxy—such as the eternity of the world, the rationality of the heavens, and the pre-existence of the soul—continue to be taught at the end of the sixth century. The school's attitude to the doctrinal convictions of its students, however, remained flexible and conciliatory.

2 Sources

Damascius, the last head of the Academy in Athens, composed a biographical history of his contemporaries and predecessors, focusing on the life of his teacher Isidore. Fragments of this history survive in Photius and the *Suda*.[5] Damascius displays a clear agenda in composing this *Life of Isidore* or *Philosophical History* (hereafter cited according to Athanassiadi 1999).[6] He critiques the triumph of rhetoric over philosophy as a guiding intellectual and political standard for his age, he castigates politicized Christianity as a symptom of the resulting social corruption, and he draws attention to human exemplars, both positive and negative, to drive home his message. The *Life* is a helpful resource, so long as it is interpreted as a work of hagiography and literature and not straight history.

We can also draw on several distinguished actors in the events of the later fifth century (discussed below), including critiques by Zacharias[7] and reports from John Philoponus (*ca*. 490–575), a Christian pupil and editor of Ammonius

3 Usener 1879 proposed that Stephanus accepted an imperial appointment in AD 610, and Westerink suggested that he brought the school's library to Constantinople (Westerink 1986; see also Rashed 2002, Goulet 2007). But Roueché has provided strong reasons to doubt this narrative (see Roueché forthcoming and 2012, and below).

4 See Lloyd 1970, Hadot 1978, Verrycken 1990, and Blank 2010: 663–66; contrast Praechter 1910: 151–56; 1912.

5 See Athanassiadi 1999: 15–17; 58.

6 See the introduction in Athanassiadi 1999: 19–70 (and the previously standard edition of Zintzen 1967); Watts 2010: 53–54. For the title, see Athanassiadi 1999: 39–40, 58.

7 See now Dillon, Russel, and Gertz 2012.

who meticulously criticized Neoplatonic (and Aristotelian) orthodoxy.[8] Finally, we have material evidence, including the recent excavations at Kom el-Dikka,[9] to sketch a picture of the lived environment.

3 Atmosphere and Curricula of the School

The city of Alexandria was a hub of higher education. The Neoplatonists taught alongside specialists in rhetoric, medicine, and other disciplines that constituted *paideia* in the cultivated Roman world.[10] A student applying to the school of Hermeias for philosophical instruction would have already mastered letters, then literature, and finally rhetoric; philosophy was a capstone discipline, sometimes regarded from outside as a kind of "finishing school" for the international culture of the lettered elite, but explained by the philosophers themselves as a unique path to human virtue (ἀρετή).[11] The curriculum and outlook of philosophical training remained resolutely pagan, but disagreements between intellectually cultivated pagans and Christians were often friendly, and the schools fostered an atmosphere of religious experimentation.[12] If a student became especially close to a teacher, they might expect to be invited to the teacher's home to share a meal and gain access to a richer, private oral tradition.[13]

3.1 *The Aristotelian Curriculum*

The Alexandrian school claimed to cultivate excellence through the close study of classical texts with a knowledgeable teacher. The study of texts could function as a kind of spiritual exercise.[14] Novices, perhaps tempted by a protreptic "Introduction to Philosophy" offered by an energetic lecturer,[15] began with Aristotle's *Organon* and finished with his *Metaphysics*, before turning to Plato,

8 See chapter 21.

9 See Derda, Markiewicz, and Wipszycka 2007; Watts 2010: 62.

10 Watts 2006: 2–7; Cribiore 2001; Kaster 1997.

11 See Olympiodorus, *On Plato's Alcibiades* 140.18–22; *On Plato's Gorgias* 1.6. The scale of virtues itself has been much discussed; see for example O'Meara 2013 and 2012, Dillon 1996.

12 For the atmosphere of the schools, see Hoffmann 2006.

13 Watts 2010: 60.

14 See Hoffmann 1987: 83–90; Hoffmann 2006.

15 Like the anonymous *Introduction to Platonic Philosophy* (Westerink 1962) and others treated below; the *Introduction* attributed to Elias, for example, is full of anecdotes and citations from the entire range of Greek literature, and was evidently designed to entertain. For the Alexandrian introductions, see Wildberg 1990.

whose dialogues would be studied in the order recommended by Iamblichus (discussed below).[16] Each lecture (πρᾶξις) would occupy about an hour, in which the lecturer would offer a high-level analysis (θεωρία) of a passage of text, followed by a line-by-line analysis (λέξις); this division likely formalized Proclus' practice.[17]

Students might have laid the groundwork for philosophy through their rhetorical training or with "baby ethics," reading material like the Pythagorean *Golden Verses* or Epictetus' *Handbook*.[18] But the starting-point for serious philosophy was logic, effectively synonymous with Aristotelian demonstration. Olympiodorus recommends the study of Aristotle because this discipline promotes precision (ἀκρίβεια) in defining the goals of human life (*Introduction to Philosophy* 1.3–24). Simplicius, another of Ammonius' pupils, stresses that human beings require logical proof as an instrument or tool (ὄργανον) through which we can distinguish between beneficial and harmful actions, and between true and false beliefs (*On Aristotle's Categories*. 14.19–25).

After mastering logic and proof through the *Categories* (simple referring terms), *On Interpretation* (sentences), *Prior Analytics* (syllogistic), and *Posterior Analytics* (demonstration), the student would ideally read Aristotle's ethics, politics, physics, and metaphysics (theology) (Ammonius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 5.31–6.8). However, engagement with Aristotle appears to have been selective, with some subjects, such as logic and metaphysics, emphasized more heavily than others, such as biology. (This judgement is based on our reports of lectures and commentaries by Ammonius and Olympiodorus; see below.) Proclus graduated from the Aristotelian curriculum in less than two years, a feat that Marinus implies was remarkable.[19]

Early lectures prepared students by following a traditional pattern of *prolegomena*, or "things that ought to be said before the study of a text."[20] A standard list of ten points originated with Proclus (according to Elias, *On Aristotle's Categories* 107.24–27) and developed in the commentaries of Ammonius, Olympiodorus, Elias, Philoponus, and Simplicius: (1) names of philosophical schools; (2) classification of Aristotle's writings; (3) the beginning: logic; (4) the goal: knowledge of God, the first principle; (5) the way to the goal: ethics, physics, mathematics, theology (metaphysics); (6) the student's

16 See Festugière 1969, Hadot 1978: chapter 7.5 (= Hadot 2001: chapter 3.5).

17 Beutler 1949: 226.

18 See the introductions to Brittain and Brennan 2002; Brennan and Brittain 2002.

19 Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 13, in Edwards 2000.

20 Mansfeld 1994, Hadot 1991.

qualifications; (7) the interpreter's qualifications; (8) Aristotle's style; (9) Aristotle's obscurity; (10) preliminaries to this text (e.g., *Categories*).

3.2 *The Platonic Curriculum*

The student would turn to Plato next. (The prior curriculum would have situated Aristotle within a Platonist framework, gently correcting or harmonizing with Plato his occasional critiques of the Academy.)[21] The Platonic dialogues guided the student through four stages of virtue: civic, purificatory, contemplative, and theurgic.[22] They were studied in the order *Alcibiades, Gorgias, Phaedo, Cratylus, Theaetetus, Sophist, Statesman, Phaedrus, Symposium*, and *Philebus*, followed by *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*, capping the study of natural and metaphysical philosophy respectively. Through this curriculum, the student hoped to achieve successive grades of virtue, contemplate intelligible reality (Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 73.32–74.3), and achieve "likeness to God" (in the language of Plato, *Theaetetus* 176 B).

4 Hermeias

Between AD 429 and 436, Hermeias was among many Alexandrian students drawn to Athens by Syrianus' charisma and Alexandrian connections. He underwent a similar training to that which Marinus describes for Proclus (*Life of Proclus* 13): he would have read "the entire works of Aristotle, logical, ethical, political, physical, and the science of theology which transcends these," followed by "Plato, in due sequence,"[23] then one of the sacred cycles of texts, such as the Orphic or Chaldaean theology.[24] While Hermeias was a match for Proclus in diligence and passion for knowledge, he had neither the temper nor talent for the cut-and-thrust of debate. He was, however, gentle, honest, and drew admiration for his character.[25]

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21 See Hadot 2015 on the Alexandrian school's approach to harmony, and Karamanolis 2006: chapter 7 on the Porphyrian sources of the later Neoplatonic consensus. On Syrianus, see e.g. Saffrey (1987) and Dillon and O'Meara 2006; for Ammonius' commitment to harmony, see Asclepius, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 69.17–27.

22 Olympiodorus, *On Plato's Phaedo* 8.2.1–20; Damascius, *On Plato's Phaedo* 1.138. See Dillon 1996, O'Meara 2013 and 2012, Tarrant 2007. On the curricular ascent, see also Hoffmann 1987, Griffin 2014a and 2014c.

23 For this curriculum, see Westerink 1962: XXXIX–XI.

24 Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 26.

25 Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 54.

Syrianus chose Proclus to fill his shoes as Platonic Successor and invited him to marry his young ward, Aedesia. But "some god [. . .] prevented Proclus from entering into marriage."[26] Later, Syrianus betrothed Aedesia to Hermeias and encouraged Hermeias to decamp to Alexandria to take up a public professorship of philosophy. He may have sought to prevent rivalry between his strongest pupils,[27] although Proclus continued to regard Hermeias as his "friend and colleague", and when Hermeias' sons came to study at Athens, Proclus gave them special care (Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 57 C). The simplest explanation might be that a publicly funded position lay open to Hermeias in Alexandria, and his acceptance of the position was good for him, his family, and both schools.

While we have little information about Hermeias' lectures or treatises, we can assume that he lectured on the Aristotelian and Platonic curriculum. His surviving commentary on the *Phaedrus* has been recognized, since Praechter, as a compendium of notes from Syrianus' seminars on the dialogue.[28] This provides some circumstantial support for Damascius' judgement (*Life of Isidore* 54) that he did not innovate. An episode in the *Phaedrus* commentary is illustrative: Hermeias reports Syrianus' explanation of the four divine madnesses of *Phaedrus* 244 A–245 B (89.20–90.2), and recounts two challenges by Proclus (92.10–13) and an interesting exchange between master and pupil on the value of theurgy.[29] But Hermeias does not editorialize. The passage does, usefully, imply that Hermeias endorses the practice of theurgy.

Hermeias and Aedesia had three children. Their firstborn, a precocious boy who remembered his past life, only lived until the age of seven. Their next sons were Ammonius and Heliodorus. Aedesia arranged for both to study philosophy under Proclus in Athens; she hoped for them to follow in their father's footsteps (Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 56), and she arranged for Hermeias' public salary to be paid to the boys while they were young.[30]

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26 Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 56.

27 Watts 2010: 208.

28 Couvreur 1901 (second edition by Zintzen 1971). Praechter 1909 originally suggested that the text recorded Syrianus' views. Dickie 1993 argues for the importance of Hermeias' role.

29 For Hermeias' discussion as a whole, see Sheppard 1982: 214–18.

30 Perhaps meaning that Hermeias' salary stayed with the family, and his professorship stood empty until it was later taken up by Ammonius. For alternate construals of *Life of Isidore* 56, see Watts 2006: 209 n. 35 and Blank 2010: 655 n. 2.

5 Ammonius

Ammonius was born around AD 440.[31] Under Proclus' tutelage, he distinguished himself in technical subjects like geometry and astronomy, swiftly surpassing his seniors (Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 57 C). Proclus gave special attention to Hermeias' sons, both because of his friendship for their father, and his warmth of feeling for their mother, Syrianus' former ward. Ammonius proved to be exceptionally diligent (φιλοπονώτατος), and he was in a strong position to make the best of Proclus' attention.

After returning to Alexandria, Ammonius took up a publicly funded professorship in philosophy. This was presumably the same professorship that Aedesia had arranged to be reserved for him; and his achievements under Proclus would have made his appointment an easy case.[32] Damascius suggests that Ammonius' family was relatively poor, thanks in part to Aedesia's prolific acts of charity for the needy; as a consequence, Ammonius may have been especially dependent on the city's public funds.[33]

In the late 480s, Ammonius was targeted by an imperial investigation.[34] There may have been political motivations, but the real cause was likely a struggle between Alexandrian's pagan intellectuals and the Christian bishop, Peter Mongus.[35] The trouble began in 486, when Paralius, a new pupil of Horapollon, was impressed by a miracle that the professors claimed for the goddess Isis.[36] Ultimately, Paralius was disappointed by his vision of the goddess at her temple, and he slandered her priestess.[37] When Horapollon's class attempted to punish Paralius, he fled into a crowd of Christian students. Peter Mongus presented Paralius' attempted punishment as an assault by the pagan teachers on the city's Christian community: the consequence was a riot and

31 For a clear and up-to-date overview of Ammonius' life, thought, and key secondary literature and controversies, see Blank 2014 and 2010; for a sample of primary texts by Ammonius, see Sorabji 2004, *Index Locorum* s.v. "Ammonius."

32 It was certainly an exceptional arrangement, though not unprecedented (Watts 2006: 210).

33 As we shall see below, this may partially underlie Damascius' criticism of Ammonius' "greed" (118B).

34 The narrative is taken from Zacharius' *Life of Severus*, edited and translated by Kugener 1971 and translated by Ambjörn 2008, following the summary in Watts 2010: chapter 1. For what follows, see Watts 2010: chapters 1–2.

35 Watts 2010: 1–22.

36 Zacharias, *Life of Severus* 16–19.

37 Zacharias, *Life of Severus* 22–23.

the destruction of the temple of Isis.[38] The professors saw an alarming analogy with the violence toward Hypatia earlier in the century.[39] Toward late 487 or 488, an imperial official, Nicomedes, arrived to investigate the teachers,[40] focusing on Ammonius.[41] Some were tortured for information, others imprisoned. Isidore, Damascius, and Asclepiodotus escaped the city, but Ammonius and Horapollon remained. Damascius, writing from a distance and after the fact, states that Horapollon later converted to Christianity, while Ammonius made an "agreement" with "the overseer of the prevailing doctrine" (presumably Peter); Damascius criticizes them both for greed (118 B, 120 B).[42]

Damascius leaves the nature of Ammonius' agreement vague, and it has been the subject of intense speculation; given Damascius' rhetorical agenda, its existence has even been doubted.[43] Ammonius presumably continued to teach and receive his public salary, upon which he was dependent: hence, perhaps, Damascius' accusation of greed. But what did Ammonius promise in return for keeping his school's doors open? Karl Praechter suggested that he no longer taught Plato, focusing instead on Aristotle,[44] since Plato was regarded as more dangerous to Christian doctrine. On the other hand, some Christian philosophers made enthusiastic use of Plato, and there is considerable evidence for Ammonius' Platonic lectures continuing into the sixth century.[45] Sorabji 1990 and 2005 has offered a more promising suggestion: perhaps Ammonius agreed not to promote pagan ritual, or theurgy, in public. There is a clear illustration in Ammonius' discussion of semantics, in his commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation* 34.10–39.10: though reliant on Proclus, Ammonius declines to use Proclus' example of theurgy for natural semantics, and substitutes a different example. As van der Berg points out,[46] there may be independent philosophical motivations for this substitution. Nonetheless, the pagan professors' public claims of miracles performed by Isis were responsible for stalling Paralius' conversion to Christianity (Zacharias, *Life of Severus* 16–19); perhaps it was just this kind of public witness, grounded

38 Zacharias, *Life of Severus* 24; Watts 2010: 12–13.

39 See Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 43 A–E.

40 Watts 2006: 220.

41 Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 117 B.

42 Westerink 1990: 327, Athanassiadi 1999 ad loc.

43 Blank 2010: 660.

44 See Praechter 1010: 151–56; 1912.

45 He lectured to Olympiodorus on the *Gorgias* in about 515 (Olympiodorus, *On the Gorgias* 199.8–10), and there is other evidence for his Platonic lectures (for example, Asclepius, *On the Metaphysics* 77.4).

46 van den Berg 2004; see also Blank 2010: 659–60.

in a long tradition of Neoplatonic "oral anecdotes,"[47] that Ammonius would henceforth avoid.

The most parsimonious explanation of Damascius' criticism may simply be that Ammonius continued to accept his public salary. In any case, Ammonius continued a long and healthy lecturing career; he likely continued to teach until about 520, educating central philosophers of the following generation.

5.1 *Thought*

Damascius describes Ammonius as a specialist in Aristotle, and a brilliant mathematician and astronomer.[48] Although he taught both Plato and Aristotle well into the sixth century (Zacharias, *Ammonius* 2.19–20), our evidence for the Aristotelian curriculum is more expansive. Even here, we face challenges: it is unclear to what extent Ammonius depends on Proclus, or where he innovates; it is also unclear where one of his student-recorders has interposed his own opinions (especially in the case of John Philoponus: see chapter 21, below); and finally, our sample of Ammonius' pedagogical output is not necessarily representative.

The only book that we have from Ammonius' hand is a commentary on the *On Interpretation*, reliant on Proclus. Most of his output survives for us today in the form of his students' lecture notes on Aristotle, under his own name or under that of his pupils.

Commentary	*Preserved under the name of*
On Porphyry's *Isagoge*	Ammonius
On Aristotle's *Categories*	Ammonius and Philoponus (2 sets of notes)
On Aristotle's *On Interpretation*	Ammonius (a treatise, not lecture notes)
On Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*	Ammonius and Philoponus (2 sets of notes)
On Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*	Philoponus
On Aristotle's *Physics*	Philoponus
On Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*	Philoponus
On Aristotle's *Meteorology*	Philoponus
On Aristotle's *On the Soul*	Philoponus
On Aristotle's *Metaphysics*	Asclepius

47 See Cox 1983: 9–20; Cox Miller 2000: 242–44; Watts 2010: 39, 63.

48 Damascius, *Life of Isidore* 57 C. For Alexandrian natural philosophy, see Praechter 1910: 155–56; Verrycken 1990: 200.

We can derive some conclusions about the shape of Ammonius' thought from internal evidence. First, he regards himself as an interpreter or commentator (ἐξηγητής). A good commentator should be intelligent and diligent in pursuing the truth through the study of his text, but also not a slave to the source (Ammonius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 8.11–19; cf. Elias, *On Aristotle's Categories*, 122.25–123.11). This view rubbed off on Ammonius' disciples (e.g. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 7.23–32), and it's likely that Simplicius also draws from Ammonius his emphasis on the commentator's role as harmonizer of Plato and Aristotle, since Ammonius goes to considerable trouble to show that Aristotle does not really criticize Plato (cf. Asclepius, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 69.17–27), whereas Syrianus and Proclus had defended Plato against Aristotle.[49]

Two aspects of Ammonius' Aristotelian exegesis are particularly noteworthy. Simplicius reports that Ammonius spilled considerable ink on a proof that the Aristotelian god is both final *and* efficient cause of the cosmos and everything in it (see texts in Sorabji 2004.2, 8(c)). He resisted Peripatetic interpreters like Alexander, who made Aristotle's god solely the *final* cause of the whole cosmos, and efficient cause of nothing but the heavens' motions.[50] This allowed Ammonius to harmonize Aristotle's intellect and "unmoved mover" with Plato's account of a productive demiurge in the *Timaeus*, replying to Proclus' critique of Aristotle (Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.266.28–268.24). Although Ammonius strove to harmonize Plato and Aristotle, the resulting interpretation of Aristotle would also later prove valuable to Islamic and Christian theologians. Secondly, Ammonius' commentary on the "sea-battle" (*On Interpretation* 9) has become in its own right a minor classic,[51] in which he describes two arguments for determinism before suggesting, against determinism, that statements about singular contingent future events ("there will be a sea-battle tomorrow", *On Interpretation* 9, 18b17–25, 19a30–32) must be either true or false *indefinitely* (οὐκ ἀφωρισμένως).[52]

More attention, however, has focused on Ammonius' metaphysics, due to Praechter's suggestion that he espoused a pre-Plotinian theology better suited to Christianity. Ammonius describes himself as a close follower of

49 See Blank 2010: 663.

50 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 271.13–21 and *On Aristotle's Physics* 1360.24–1363.24. See Blank 2014: 3.2.

51 See for example Sorabji 1998.

52 For this, see Blank 2014: 3.3. Ammonius may build on a distinction offered by Alexander, *Questions* 1.4 (Sharples 1992, 32–36).

Proclus,[53] and this seems to be true. But on Praechter's view,[54] Ammonius compressed the upper hypostases of Proclan Neoplatonism, reframing the Intellect or Demiurge as the highest God, and omitting or de-emphasizing the transcendent One or Good. From the Neoplatonic perspective, that would make Aristotle's divine Intellect—identified by Platonists with the hypostasis Intellect or *Nous*—into the highest hypostasis, and facilitate syncretism with contemporary Christianity.

But there are difficulties.[55] Asclepius' commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, our best source for Ammonius' metaphysics, highlights the transcendence of the One beyond Intellect.[56] Even in the commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, which is meant to be elementary, Ammonius retains the standard three hypostases (*On Aristotle's On the Interpretation* 24.24–29). Admittedly, Ammonius has little to say explicitly about the 'henads', or fundamental divine individualities, that populate Proclus' first hypostasis; but his language in the commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation* seems to presuppose them ("divine ranks [...] each with its unique character [ἰδιότης]," 135.28–32).[57] If Ammonius did develop small technical differences from Proclus in theology, there is no reason to put that down to Christian doctrinal pressure.[58] Perhaps the natural place to look for an explanation is where Damascius suggests: Ammonius specializes in commentary on Aristotle, and especially enjoys the study of the natural sciences. He is arguably less *interested* in the upper stories of Neoplatonic metaphysics.

6 Olympiodorus

Ammonius lectured into the second decade of the sixth century, at least through the dramatic date of Zacharias' dialogue *Ammonius*. His chair in philosophy then passed (indirectly) to a young professor, Olympiodorus, likely

53 Ammonius, *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 1.3–11.

54 Praechter 1912: 5 n. 5.

55 See Lloyd 1970, Hadot 1978, Verrycken 1990, and Blank 2010: 663–66.

56 Verrycken 1990: 205–08.

57 Verrycken 1990: 213. Verrycken notes (following Saffrey and Westerink 1978: LXXXVI) that the henads are not discussed at all in Asclepius' commentary on the *Metaphysics*, and suggests that Ammonius' thought may have changed, though this might also be a function of the source material.

58 Blank 2010: 665–66.

born between AD 495 and 505.[59] Olympiodorus sometimes refers to Ammonius as "forefather" or "ancestor," which might indicate a literal family connection, or (more probably) a professional succession.[60] If the latter is true, it is plausible that another person held the chair between Ammonius and Olympiodorus. John Philoponus, the editor of Ammonius' lectures an otherwise tempting candidate, is ruled out, on the grounds that he is named professor of letters (γραμματικός), not professor of philosophy (φιλόσοφος). The most likely intervening party is a mathematician named Eutocius, who lectured in Alexandria on Porphyry's *Isagoge* (Elias, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 134.4).

We know little of Olympiodorus apart from his lectures, preserved in students' notes taken "from his voice" (ἀπὸ φωνῆς).[61] He was once confused with the deacon Olympiodorus, which appears to be chronologically impossible,[62] and with an author of alchemical texts (see below). But we can retrieve some genuine outlines of his life and work from internal evidence.

Olympiodorus was likely born and raised in Alexandria.[63] When he was appointed to the chair, he was still young and finding his feet. His lectures on Plato offer clues to his intellectual development over a long career, which stretched at least until AD 565.[64] His course on Plato's *Gorgias* relies heavily on anecdotes and reports of Ammonius, especially in the later lectures.[65] Westerink reasonably concludes that these lectures were delivered early in Olympiodorus' life.[66] His course on the *Alcibiades* is more complex, and draws on a richer reservoir of sources, demonstrating familiarity with Damascius as

59 See Westerink 1962: XIII–XIV; Wildberg 2008a; Opsomer 2010; Tarrant 1997. Olympiodorus was old enough to hear Ammonius lecture in the 520s, so he could not have been born much later than 505. He lived to lecture at least until 565, so he could not have been born much earlier than 495.

60 Compare Proclus' use of προπάτωρ at *On Plato's Parmenides* 1058.22, and Marinus, *Life of Proclus* 29.

61 For the locution, see Richard 1950.

62 Westerink 1976: 20.

63 At *On Aristotle's Meteorology* 169.34, Alexandria is "our city"; see also *On Plato's Alcibiades* 2.80–2 (Opsomer 2010: 697n2).

64 Olympiodorus' commentary on Aristotle's *Meteorology* can be dated after 565, on account of his description of a comet that year (52.31).

65 As has been frequently pointed out; see e.g. Westerink 1990: 331; Watts 2010: 61–2. For exegesis, e.g., at 32.2, 41.9; for personal anecdotes, 24.2, 39.2, 40.5, 44.5, 44.6, 48.5, with comments by Jackson, Lycos and Tarrant 1998: 252n739.

66 Westerink 1990: 331; see also Jackson, Lycos and Tarrant 1998: 3–4.

well as Proclus.[67] These (presumably later) lectures on the *Alcibiades* are more difficult to date, but it is reasonable to suppose that they belong to the later 550s or 560s.[68]

The following courses can be attributed to Olympiodorus with confidence. The dates of the latter commentaries are chiefly educated guesswork, as described above. In rough curricular order, they illustrate the range of teaching that was still available in Olympiodorus' school:

On Porphyry's *Isagoge* (lost, but serves as a source for David and Elias' lectures);
Prolegomena to Aristotelian Philosophy (extant);
On Aristotle's *Categories* (extant);
On Aristotle's *On the Interpretation* (partially extant as scholia);[69]
On Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption* (lost, but mentioned by Arabic sources);[70]
On Aristotle's *Meteorology* (extant; delivered in 565);
On Aristotle's *On the Soul* (lost, but mentioned by Arabic sources);[71]
On Plato's *Alcibiades* (extant; delivered *ca.* 555–560?);
On Plato's *Gorgias* (extant; delivered in the 520s?);
On Plato's *Phaedo* (extant for *Phaedo* 62 C–79 E; delivered between 530s and 540s?);
On Plato's *Sophist* (lost, but cited in Arabic sources, and mentioned by Olympiodorus himself).[72]

67 For instance, Olympiodorus accepts Proclus' interpretation of the phrase "self itself" (αὐτό τὸ αὐτό, from *Alcibiades* 130 D) without discussion in his lectures on *Gorgias* (18.2, 103.26–104.2) and *Phaedo* (8.6.10–12), but in lecturing on the *Alcibiades* he attempts to adjudicate and harmonize Proclus and Damascius (204.15–205.7; 209.15–210.11; see also 5.17–8.14 on the topic or σκοπός of the dialogue). See Opsomer 2010: 698.

68 At 141.1–3 Olympiodorus comments that "the endowment [of the Academy] has lasted . . . despite the many confiscations that are underway," implying that these lectures predate the closure of the Athenian school in 529. But he also refers to the recent arrival of a governor named Hephaestus (2.80–2), which likely took place in 546. Perhaps the endowment of the Academy continued after 529 (Tannery 1896: 286; Westerink 1990: 330).

69 Scholia in *Vaticanus Urbinas graecus* 35, included in Tarán 1978.

70 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist* 251.5; see Opsomer 2010: 699n9; Westerink 1976: 21–22n32–33.

71 And perhaps excerpted in one manuscript, *Ambrosianus Q74 Sup*.

72 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist* 246.11–12 (Dodge 1970: 593) and 215.13–14 (Dodge 1970: 604). Olympiodorus mentions lectures on the *Sophist* (*On Plato's Alcibiades* 110.8–9).

A surviving Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy has often been credited to Olympiodorus, but is likely the work of a student.[73] There is also a commentary on Paulus of Alexandria (an astrological manual), dateable to summer 564; the lecturer, who presumably belongs to Olympiodorus' school, demonstrates stylistic and substantial affinities with Olympiodorus' school,[74] but disagrees with Olympiodorus himself on some key points (Opsomer 2010: 710). The anonymous notes on the *Phaedo* and *Philebus* preserved in *Marcianus graecus* 196 have been proven to belong to Damascius.[75] An alchemical commentary on Zosimus of Panoplis, *On Operation* was attributed to Olympiodorus in antiquity or later, but its treatment of Aristotle and Plato could hardly have been authored by an Alexandrian philosophy professor; the attribution probably sought to lend the manuscript the authority of Olympiodorus' name. Perhaps, however, the author did build upon Olympiodorus' lectures on Aristotle's *Meteorology*;[76] he may have been a Christian alchemist[77] who studied under Olympiodorus.

Although Olympiodorus saw the exile of his peers in the Athenian school, the surviving records from his lifetime of lecturing suggest no hostility.[78] He did not withdraw from the philosophical positions that typified later ancient Platonism. Instead, his students encountered a wholesale defender of the webwork of Hellenic *paideia*,[79] who professed traditionally pagan views about contentious philosophical topics including the eternity of the natural world, the reverence of stone images, the transmigration of souls, the nature of *daimônes*, and even the virtue of ritual theurgy (see below), while carefully making room for his students' convictions.

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73 Westerink 1962; Westerink, Trouillard and Segonds 1990.

74 Though attributed in the past to Ammonius' brother Heliodorus, the lecturer dates his course to summer 564, which makes Heliodorus an implausible author. The attribution to Olympiodorus' school rests on stylistic resemblance (the θεωρία–λέξις division) and similarities with Olympiodorus' lectures on Aristotle's *Meteorology*, delivered the following year. (See Opsomer 2010: 700).

75 Westerink 1959: xv–xx; 1977: 15–77.

76 Viano 2006.

77 The author ascribes to "the Lord" (94.13–15) a quotation from St. Paul (*Second Epistle to the Corinthians* 3.6), as Wildberg 2008a: §4 points out.

78 An epigram attributed by David to Olympiodorus in the *Greek Anthology* might suggest otherwise: "Had the writing of Plato not checked my impulse / I would have loosened by now the grievous, baneful bond of life" (*Appendix* 177). But the context is unlikely to be autobiographical, reflecting instead Olympiodorus' philosophical views on suicide and his exegesis of the *Phaedo*.

79 See Tarrant 1997: 182–183.

6.1 *Thought*

In metaphysics, Olympiodorus is an orthodox Neoplatonist: he describes the One, Intellect (subdivided into the triad Being, Life, and Intellect), and Soul (*On Plato's Alcibiades* 103.10; 109.18–111.2). While praising Aristotle's recognition of a single first principle in *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*), he criticizes him for ranking that principle with Intellect, the second hypostasis (*On Plato's Alcibiades* 122.13; 145.6–9):[80] this is particularly interesting, given Ammonius' preference for harmonization, and the criticism may reflect Olympiodorus' deeper engagement in this commentary with Proclus and Damascius. He is also strongly committed to the harmony of Plato and Aristotle in general (*On Plato's Alcibiades* 5.29–32). In psychology, Olympiodorus stresses the crucial role of the "common concepts" (κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι) that we all share in virtue of our participation in Intellect (*On Plato's Alcibiades* 18.1–5; 40.18–41.4):[81] once refined by dialectic, they make philosophical demonstration possible (e.g., *On Plato's Gorgias* 3.1).

Olympiodorus' lectures do not compromise on major points of pagan difference with Christianity. The eternity of the cosmos was a central point of tension: Zacharias had attacked Ammonius on just this point, and John Philoponus had used this point to distinguish himself, as a Christian, from paganism. But even as late as 565, Olympiodorus continues to defend the eternity and divinity of the cosmos.[82] He also rejects the theory of eternal punishment (*On Plato's Gorgias* 263.17–264.26) and maintains the value of theurgy (*On Plato's Phaedo* 8.2.1–20).

Building on his commitment to the "common notions" that we all share,[83] Olympiodorus is nonetheless careful to strike a conciliatory tone with the "popular doctrine" (συνήθεια) of Christianity.[84] One often-cited example occurs in his lectures on the *Alcibiades*, where he substitutes 'Democriteans' for Proclus' parallel (coded) critique of Christianity.[85] But it was especially Olympiodorus' *manner* of accommodating Christianity that led Westerink to attribute to him "a pliability so extreme indeed that it might be more correct to speak of a teaching routine than a philosophy."[86] It has appeared to some commentators

80 Opsomer 2010: 705 n29 also points to a parallel at David (Elias), *On Aristotle's Categories* 120.24–30.

81 See Opsomer 2010: 705–6.

82 Olympiodorus, *On Aristotle's Meteorology* 115.11–13; 118.5–119.8; 120.13–14 and 20–21; 153.19–21 (cited in Westerink 1990: 333).

83 Tarrant 1997: 189–91.

84 With Tarrant 1997, see Griffin 2014b.

85 Proclus, *On Plato's Alcibiades* 264.5–6; Olympiodorus, *On Plato's Alcibiades* 92.4–9.

86 Westerink 1976: 23. Tarrant has also stressed Olympiodorus' primary commitment as a teacher of Hellenism, a "classicist" or "champion of some ancient heritage that needed

that his willingness to accommodate other viewpoints might lead to an impossibly pliant and so incoherent philosophy, a "toothless Platonism" (see Wildberg 2005, 321).[87] Thus Olympiodorus excuses Socrates' oath "by Hera" (*On Plato's Gorgias* 449 D) with the remark that "we should not understand things spoken in mythical mode in their surface meaning," stressing that the name "Hera" really signifies the rational soul (*On Plato's Gorgias* 4.3). "We too know," Olympiodorus continues (καὶ γὰρ ἴσμεν καὶ ἡμεῖς), "that there is the one first cause, namely God, and not many." Continuing with this general theme, Olympiodorus asks his students not to believe that "philosophers honor representations in stone as divine" (*On Plato's Gorgias* 47.5). Representations of gods in stone serve "as a reminder" of bodiless and immaterial "powers," reflecting Olympiodorus' earlier comment that different gods could be viewed as "powers" of the one God.

As Tarrant has pointed out,[88] the "pliability" that has been attributed to Olympiodorus in his relationship to Christianity should be viewed in the broader light of his philosophy as a whole. In all these cases, Olympiodorus' treatment of names and myths is not *merely* a response to Christianity. All myths are falsehoods picturing the truth,[89] but contemporary society "respects only what is apparent, and does not search at all for what is concealed in the depths of the myth" (*On Plato's Gorgias* 46.4). His treatment of the dialogue form maintains that the characters are allegorical; the "actual truth" which the philosophers pursue in a myth is the ἐπιμύθιον, the moral of the story (*On Plato's Gorgias* 34.4). It is characteristic of Olympiodorus to suggest that superficial disagreement on the level of "names" overlies genuine agreement on the deeper level of reality. Arguably, Olympiodorus strives to construct a distinctive identity for himself as a "philosopher."[90] He frames all non-philosophers as engaged in the study of "appearances" (φαινόμενα) or myths, thereby liable to doctrinal disagreement and dispute—which may include the superficial disputes between Christians and pagans—while genuine philosophers drill down to the real, psychological meaning of myth and doctrine, and therefore rarely disagree.

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to be kept alive," while drawing out his views on the common ground of Platonism and Christianity. Indeed, Olympiodorus regarded himself as a teacher first and foremost, an expounder of Hellenic *paideia* (Tarrant 1997: 188–192).

87 See Griffin 2014a: Introduction.

88 Tarrant 1997.

89 On this point, see also *Republic* 2, 377 A, and Jackson & *alii* 1998: 290n876.

90 I try to develop this case further in Griffin 2014a.

7 Elias, David, and Stephanus

We have scattered evidence for Alexandrian lecturers who seem likely to have been Olympiodorus' pupils, or substantially indebted to the intellectual tradition of Ammonius and Olympiodorus. Their names imply Christian identities, although the lectures attributed to them continue to be uncompromisingly 'Hellenic' on points of doctrinal dispute such as the eternity of the world.[91]

7.1 *Elias*[92]

An incomplete manuscript of a commentary on the *Prior Analytics* is attributed to a certain "Elias," described as a "philosopher" and "ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων" ("former eparch"). The commentary demonstrates sufficient verbal similarities to the lectures of Olympiodorus that it seems reasonable to infer that the author was Olympiodorus' student.[93] This title ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων is ambiguous:[94] it might simply be an honorific bestowed on a cultivated person in recognition of cultural achievement, or it might identify Elias with a prefect of Ilyrium in December of 541, the addressee of Justinian's Novella 153. The latter identification seems less likely.

Elias taught courses on Aristotle and Plato, according to his account in the *Prior Analytics* commentary,[95] but only his lectures on Aristotelian logic survive. There is an introduction to philosophy and commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, an introduction to Aristotle and commentary on the *Categories* (which may be credited either to David or to Elias),[96] and the partial commentary on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*. Modern scholars tend to use the name "Elias" as shorthand for the author of these commentaries, without committing to a specific historical identity.[97]

Elias retains a basically Platonist outlook: he defends the eternity of the cosmos,[98] and repeats that the goal of philosophy is "likeness to God" (*Theaetetus* 176 A–B). He does allow for miracles (242.11, echoing Philoponus' report of Ammonius, *On the Categories* 169.19), and occasionally the manu-

91 See Westerink 1990.

92 See now Wildberg 2008b.

93 Westerink offers a thorough list at 1990: 336–8.

94 Westerink 1990: 336.

95 Elias, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 123.9–11.

96 Contrast Ouzounian 1994 and Goulet 2000b; see also Arevšatyan 1969, Mahé 1990, and Militello 2014: 94n13.

97 Wildberg 2008a.

98 Elias, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 120.16–17; 187.6–7.

scripts have a parenthetical interjection such as "according to the false views of the Hellenes,"[99] though with his editor Busse, we might see these as the student recorder's or copyist's interventions. Like Olympiodorus, Elias often comes across as a lively lecturer, citing a diverse array of classical sources.[100]

7.2 *David*[101]

The commentator named in some Greek manuscripts as "David" is an even more mysterious figure. A commentary on the *Categories* is attributed to him in the manuscript, but has recently been credited to Elias. He also delivered an *Introduction to Philosophy* and commented on Porphyry's *Isagoge* and Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*. The author of these texts refers to Olympiodorus (*Introduction to Philosophy* 16.3, 31.34, 64.32), and has often been supposed to be his pupil. There is little evidence in the Greek tradition for David: only sixteenth-century manuscripts and one from the fourteenth century name "David" as the author; the earlier manuscripts are anonymous or offer different attributions, for example, to Elias, or to other respected figures.[102]

The *Introduction to Philosophy* was translated into Armenian before or during the fourteenth century. There also relatively complete Armenian translations of the commentaries on *Isagoge* and *Prior Analytics*. The Armenian tradition attributed these to David the Invincible,[103] a theologian and formidable debater described as active during the fifth century AD. While chronology may pose problems for that traditional identification, the influence of David in Armenian is astounding, and bears further study (see Calzolari and Barnes 2009).

There is also a commentary *On Porphyry's Isagoge* that seems closely related to David's commentary, but whose authorship belongs neither to David nor to Elias; this was published by Westerink, naming the author "Pseudo-Elias (Pseudo-David)."[104]

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99 Elias, *On Aristotle's Prior Analytics* 7.3; 12.1; 69.22.

100 Wildberg 2008a: "there are 15 quotations from Homer as well as numerous scattered references to Aristotle, Plotinus, Proclus, Marinus, Hierocles, Pythagoras, Archilochus, Theognis, Herodotus, Callimachus, Demosthenes, Sophocles, Euripides, Menander, Galen, and an unnamed Stoic."

101 See Wildberg 2008c, Calzolari and Barnes 2009.

102 Wildberg 2008c.

103 See Muradyan 2014; translation by Kendall and Thompson 1983.

104 See Marcovich 1975, Westerink 1967; for translation, Mueller-Jourdan 2007.

7.3 *Stephanus*[105]

Among the last known representatives of the school is an author named "Stephanus" in the heading of a course on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*. Stephanus explicitly recognizes the authority of Christian doctrine and the Bible, but he does not revise the basic views of Platonism: he describes (and does not refute) the eternity of the cosmos,[106] the rationality of the heavens,[107] and the existence of the human soul before birth.[108] Some passages align closely with Christian views, such as Stephanus' treatment of future contingents and divine foreknowledge (*On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 35.34–36.8).

Who was this commentator? The ninth-century *Concise Chronography* describes one "Stephanus, the Alexandrian philosopher" who "interpreted the table (κανών)" under Heraclius (who reigned in Constantinople from AD 610–641). A handbook on Ptolemy's *Handy Tables*, composed in Constantinople in 617–18, is extant and attributed in a fifteenth-century copy to "Stephanus the great philosopher."[109] In 1879, Usener combined this evidence into a very attractive hypothesis: the Aristotelian commentator Stephanus began his teaching career in Alexandria, but moved to Constantinople shortly after the accession of Heraclius in 610 (likely bringing with him the manuscripts of the school, on which our tradition is based).[110] There he was named ecumenical professor at the Imperial Academy (οἰκούμενος διδάσκαλος). If Usener were correct, we would be better informed about Stephanus than about Elias or David;[111] following Westerink (1986), we would also have a good explanation for the survival of the school's lecture records to the present day. Unfortunately, the evidence for this narrative is insecure. The title "ecumenical professor" appears to be anachronistic (as it is not attested before the ninth century) and cannot provide support for the hypothesis of an imperially sponsored appointment.[112]

With the seventh century, the Alexandrian school passes out of history. But by the early tenth century, Constantinople was on the verge of a scholarly renaissance. One of its leading intellectuals was studying the celebrated

105 See Usener 1879, Vancourt 1941: 43–8, Wolska-Conus, W. 1989, Goulet 2007, Rashed 2002, Roueché forthcoming, 2012, 2011.

106 "According to Aristotle," 540.27. For these references, I am indebted to Westerink 1990: 340.

107 595.33–598.7.

108 541.20–542.5.

109 The scholar is Joannes Chortasmenos (*Vaticanus Urbinas graecus* 80; see Usener 1879: 3–5).

110 So conjectures Westerink 1986: lxxvii; see also Rashed 2002.

111 See Westerink 1990: 341, with notes.

112 Roueché forthcoming, 2012, and 2011.

'philosophical collection' of vellum manuscripts, which had perhaps arrived from Alexandria two centuries earlier, including the single copy that preserved Olympiodorus' Platonic lectures (*Marcianus graecus* 196). That manuscript vanished for five centuries, before finally reappearing in the collection of Basilius Bessarion, who donated it to the Senate of Venice in 1468. There, like many of the Greek manuscripts pouring out of the East, it contributed to the renaissance of the Neoplatonic interpretation of Aristotle considered in this chapter.

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CHAPTER 21

Simplicius and Philoponus on the Authority of Aristotle

Pantelis Golitsis

1 Introduction

Simplicius of Cilicia and John Philoponus of Alexandria share many common features but differ in one most important respect: their interpretation of Aristotle. They were contemporaries and both attended the seminars of Ammonius, son of Hermias, in Alexandria.[1] Ammonius (died shortly before AD 517) was a Neoplatonist who focused his teaching more on Aristotle than on Plato, and it was presumably under his influence that both Simplicius and Philoponus commented on Aristotle and not on Plato. Throughout their commentaries, however, one is guided to radically opposing interpretations of Aristotle's philosophy.

Simplicius endeavoured to establish Aristotle not only as an unshakable authority in philosophy of language and natural philosophy but also as a philosopher who fully shared with Plato knowledge of the divine truth (i.e. the truth about the first realities of cosmos: the Soul, the Intelligence, and the One). Philoponus, on the other hand, rejected Aristotle as an authority, countered many of his arguments in his Aristotelian commentaries, and openly opposed Aristotle in his treatise *On the Eternity of the World against*

1 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 462.20–21, where Simplicius reports witnessing an important astronomical observation made in Alexandria by his "teacher Ammonius." As for Philoponus, many of his commentaries consist in polished notes (ἀποσημειώσεις) taken from the seminars of Ammonius, on which see more below. Nevertheless, Simplicius says (*On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 26.18–19) that he is not aware of having ever met Philoponus. However, this lack of personal acquaintance with his adversary is easily justified, if it is assumed that Simplicius had already left for Athens (where he joined the Platonic successor Damascius), when Philoponus, who was originally devoted to the study of grammar (γραμματικός), started studying philosophy with Ammonius. Simplicius' qualification of Philoponus as a "young crow" (*On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 42.17: νεαρὸς κόραξ), suggests that Philoponus was younger than Simplicius.

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Aristotle.[2] One should abstain, however, from thinking in a simplistic manner of Simplicius as the "traditionalist" and of Philoponus as the "modernist." Philoponus seems to have fully accepted the authority of Moses while commenting on the *Genesis*, and the fully equal rank that Simplicius granted to Aristotle and Plato was a novelty within the Neoplatonic tradition. Both philosophers, we might say, served a religious purpose by using a philosophical method; they both had recourse to philosophical exegesis, the former in order to demolish Hellenic authorities and establish the truth of Christianity, mainly its doctrine of creationism, the latter in order to defend Hellenism as a unitary and perennial system of thought.

2 Simplicius' Vindication of Aristotle

Alongside his commentary on Epictetus' *Handbook*, Simplicius wrote extensive commentaries on the following Aristotelian writings: *Categories, Physics*, and *On the Heavens*.[3] He shared with other Neoplatonists the idea that philosophy was not accessible at once but had to be instilled into the soul of the novice progressively according to an organized and carefully planned curriculum.[4] Aristotle had to be taught before Plato; moreover, within Aristotle's works, the logical treatises had to be taught before the treatises on natural philosophy, and within Aristotle's treatises on natural philosophy, the *Physics*, as a work on the common principles of nature, had to be taught before the treatise *On the Heavens*.[5] Simplicius, however, composed his Aristotelian commentaries following an order that is contrary to the progression of the curriculum: the commentary on the *Categories* refers back to the commentary on the *Physics*, while the commentary on the *Physics* refers back to the commentary on the treatise *On the Heavens*.[6] Unless one is willing to accept the implausible solution of fortuity, the only compelling explanation for this "anomaly" is that Simplicius

2 This treatise, otherwise lost, survives only in Simplicius' abundant quotations. The fragments are collected and translated in Wildberg 1987.

3 There is by now an almost full consensus (the only exception, to my knowledge, is Hadot 2014) that the commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul*, ascribed to Simplicius in the manuscript tradition, is the work of Simplicius' fellow Priscian of Lydia, as was suggested by Bossier-Steel 1972; see also Steel 1997: 105–140. As I too believe that Priscian is the author of this commentary, I will not discuss it in the present contribution.

4 See Hoffmann 1998.

5 The Neoplatonic curriculum is discussed in detail in Hadot 1990.

6 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 435.21; Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1118.3, 1146.27, 1169.7, 1175.32, 1178.36, 1330.2, 1335.1.

found it opportune to launch his exegetical work on Aristotle with a commentary on the treatise *On the Heavens*, which was the main target of Philoponus' criticism of Aristotle. In short, Simplicius' exegetical activity on Aristotle is posterior to Philoponus' criticism and is best understood as a response to Philoponus.

2.1 *Defending Eternalism against Christianity*

Quite early in the commentary, Simplicius makes clear his resolution to rebuke Philoponus' arguments against Aristotle. He describes this as an ungraceful task that the more purified (οἱ καθαριώτεροι)—that is, the philosophers who possess the purificatory (or cathartic) virtues—would be unwilling to assume:

> Because of his desire [Philoponus] proposes to contradict the arguments of Aristotle before us in books of enormous length, not only hoping to intimidate the fools [οἱ ἀνόητοι, i.e. the Christians] by quantity but also deterring, I should think, the majority [of us]—in particular the more purified—from reading this extraordinary nonsense. As a consequence, his writings have remained unexamined, and just from the fact of his having written so many pages against Aristotle they have earned the author a reputation for wisdom.[7]

The passage makes clear that Philoponus, who had previously published a similar work against Proclus,[8] had made himself quite a name in Alexandria by publishing his *On the Eternity of the World against Aristotle*. It seems that people who were worried by its content, i.e. learned Pagans in Alexandria, judged it necessary to bring the work to the attention of Simplicius, who had by then probably settled in his homeland Cilicia.[9] Simplicius undertook to refute Philoponus' arguments thoroughly, so as to defend Aristotle's authority and, through it, the rightness of the pagan belief in the eternity of the world. He did so, as he says, "for the benefit of those who have a superficial understanding (τοῖς ἐπιπολαίως

7 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 25.28–34 (trans. Wildberg 1987, modified).

8 Rabe 1899. As is made clear in 579.14–15, Philoponus was composing this work in AD 529.

9 Scholars have not yet reached a consensus regarding the place in which Simplicius settled after he left Persia, to where he had fled with other philosophers from Athens as a consequence of Justinian's banning school's activities in AD 529. To me, Cilicia seems to be the most plausible suggestion; see Golitsis 2015. At any rate, it is certain that Simplicius was living far from Alexandria (for he would not otherwise be able to claim that he never met Philoponus). The mere fact that he was notified about Philoponus' polemics shows the high reputation that he enjoyed as a philosopher among contemporary pagans.

ἀκούουσιν) of [Philoponus],"[10] in other words, those who were to be convinced by his arguments. Simplicius' refutation of Philoponus is orchestrated in two parts: the first part is found in his commentary on the first book of *On the Heavens*, and the second in his commentary on the last book of the *Physics*. Having completed the first part of his task, Simplicius declares his readiness to refute Philoponus' arguments against *Physics* 8, beginning from another starting point (ἀπ' ἄλλης ἀρχῆς), i.e. through commenting on the *Physics*.[11] This concerted effort against his adversary's case for creationism explains why the first Aristotelian treatise to be studied in the Neoplatonic curriculum, that is, the *Categories*, was commented on last by Simplicius.

Simplicius distinguishes between educated (πεπαιδευμένοι) and uneducated (ἀπαίδευτοι) people. He considers that the former are at no risk of being affected by Philoponus' arguments. The latter, on the contrary, might be tempted by Philoponus' innovative philosophy, which doubts the "ancient glory" (παλαιὰ εὔκλεια). It is for the sake of these people, i.e. uneducated Pagans and Christians alike,[12] on the condition that they are lovers of learning (φιλομαθεῖς), that Simplicius sets forth his refutations of Philoponus:

> And as for me, in setting myself to elucidate Aristotle's treatise *On the Heavens* to the best of my ability, I thought I should not pass over this man's [sc. Philoponus'] objections, which will disturb no educated men but rather the uneducated, in particular those who always take pleasure in unusual things and are oppressed by the glory of the ancient [philosophers], and still more those who think they serve God if they believe that the heavens which, as they say, came into existence for the service of man, possess nothing exceptional in comparison with the things below the moon, and if they take the heavens to be perishable like them. For in the belief that his objections support their opinion about God they hold them in great esteem, although they know nothing about these things and still less about the writings of Aristotle, against which they dare to raise the objections, but boast to each other and say to us with youthful insolence that the doctrines of the philosophers have been overturned. Thus, for the sake of these people [*sc.* the uneducated Christians] and of those who are easily misled [in their interpretation of the ancient philosophers], and so that Aristotle's

10 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 184.30–31.

11 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 201.3–10.

12 The uneducated have to be distinguished from the fools (ἀνόητοι), i.e. the ignorant Christians who are considered to be incurable; these are bound to be impressed by the mass of Philoponus' work, being wholly unable to go through its content.

> treatise *On the Heavens* and the religious conception of the universe should keep their ancient glory unrefuted, I decided to set forth these objections and to refute them to the best of my ability. For it appeared to be more suitable to combine the objections and their refutation with the comments on the treatise.[13]

Simplicius presents his refutation of Philoponus' arguments as being aside from his main task, which is to explicate Aristotle's text; however, it is clear that his lengthy refutations of Philoponus (both in his commentary on the treatise *On the Heavens* and in his commentary on the *Physics*) constitute an essential part of his exegesis. More to the point: his wish to treat Philoponus' objections within a commentary rather than in a different context suggests a twofold strategy: (a) rebuttal of the opponent's arguments, which are shown to be based on inadequate understanding of Aristotle's text, and (b) establishment of the true doctrine of Aristotle, supported by a correct interpretation of his text. Simplicius' commentaries on Aristotle aim at providing a model of how to perform philosophical exegesis correctly, as if the people to whom they are addressed had no opportunity to go through a curriculum at all.[14] Contrary to the logic of a real curriculum, Simplicius provides us, separately in each one of his commentaries, with an integral interpretation of Aristotle, read in the light of Plato's philosophy (as construed, of course, by the Neoplatonists). His commentaries are decidedly lengthier than any commentary taught in schools (Simplicius constantly addresses not real pupils but readers)'[15] and contain extensive quotations of Plato and other ancient authors.

In commenting on the two main Aristotelian treatises on natural philosophy, the *Physics* and *On the Heavens*, Simplicius wishes, above all, to reject the claim of erudite Christianity,[16] represented *par excellence* by Philoponus, that the universe is not eternal. Simplicius rebukes some of Philoponus' arguments against Aristotle by adopting an alternative reading of Aristotle's text. One of Philoponus' main claims, for instance,[17] is that Aristotle's demonstration that no finite magnitude—such as the universe—can possess an infinite

13 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 25.36–26.17 (trans. Wildberg 1987, modified).

14 See Golitsis 2016a.

15 He speaks of οἱ ἐντυγχάνοντες, οἱ ἐντευξόμενοι; cf. *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 48.22, 75.13, 102.16, 298.21, 653.9; *On Aristotle's Physics* 88.11, 111.17, 601.13, 762.29, 1040.16, 1182.38, 1333.34; *On Aristotle's Categories* 3.14, 370.6.

16 That is, the Christianity that made use of philosophical arguments, stressing the oppositions that exist within the Hellenic tradition.

17 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1327.11–19.

power (δύναμις; cf. Aristotle, *Physics* 8.10, 266a23–b6) implies that the universe is perishable, since its finite power will be at some time exhausted. Simplicius replies that Philoponus wrongly believes that "he is eliminating the eternity of the universe when he eliminates its infinite power,"[18] for "having finite power" and "being perishable" are not the same thing. The worthy exegete of Aristotle must distinguish between (a) what possesses an infinite power all at once and causes motion eternally, namely the motionless first mover, and (b) what is able to be in motion eternally, that is, the universe; (a) has the attribute of possessing infinite power all at once in actuality, whereas (b) is infinite in the sense of being able to be moved *ad infinitum* in virtue of a passive receptive power that belongs to it potentially and is brought to actuality by the first mover.[19]

Simplicius' main assumptions, however, come not (at least not directly) from Aristotle's treatises but from Plato's *Timaeus*. If the demiurge is always in the same condition and unvarying, says Simplicius, then he is also unchanging in substance, potentiality, and actuality; therefore, he cannot be sometimes a world-maker and sometimes idle and sterile (ποτὲ μὲν κοσμοποιὸς…ποτὲ δὲ ἀργὸς καὶ ἄγονος). Rather, he must be an eternal creator, disposing of an unchanging goodness (ἀμετάβλητος ἀγαθότης), which the heavens and the sublunary beings imitate (the first through their everlasting motion, the second through their perpetual generation). If, furthermore, the demiurge is good (ἀγαθός, cf. *Timaeus* 29 E 1), he cannot produce something perishable, for he would lose his goodness in producing something unlike himself.[20]

Simplicius reports that Philoponus himself appealed to the *Timaeus* in order to deny Aristotle's claim that there is a substantial difference between the heavens and the sublunary world,[21] the former being made of a weightless element (aether) which thus moves in a circle, the latter being the result of a combination of two light elements moving in a straight line upwards (fire and air) and two heavy elements moving in a straight line downwards (water and earth). Philoponus invoked those passages where Plato affirms that the heavens are mostly composed of fire (e.g. *Timaeus* 40 A 2–3). Simplicius' reply is that (a) a philosopher trained in Plato should read *Timaeus* 40 A in the light of *Timaeus* 58 C, where Plato distinguishes between three different kinds of fire (i.e. embers, flame, and light), and (b) this philosopher should understand that for Plato too there exists a fifth celestial element that transcends the

18 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1335.21–23.

19 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1327.29–35.

20 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1330.37–1331.7; *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 96.7–12, 184.28–30.

21 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 84.11–22.

sublunary ones; it is composed of the summits (i.e. the perfect or pure states) of the four elements, where the summit of fire, i.e. light, is predominant.[22] As with Aristotle, Philoponus is judged unable to grasp Plato's thought.[23] It is a feature of the good commentator to be able to see (and teach other to see) the harmony reigning over the philosophy of Aristotle and Plato.

2.2 *Explaining Aristotle's Criticism of Plato*

The perennial disagreement among Greek philosophers was one of the basic arguments invoked by Christian apologists. It was therefore essential to Simplicius' defence of Hellenism to eradicate any appeal to Aristotle as instantiating such a disagreement. In the prolegomena to Aristotle's philosophy, traditionally placed before the *Categories*, Simplicius prescribes as a duty of the worthy exegete the establishment of the agreement (συμφωνία) between Plato and Aristotle:

> [The worthy exegete of Aristotle's writings] must, I believe, not convict the philosophers of discordance by looking only at the letter (λέξις) of what Aristotle says against Plato; but he must look toward what Aristotle means (νοῦς), and track down the harmony which reigns between them on the majority of points.[24]

By making the agreement of the two philosophers a prerequisite for the interpretation of Aristotle, Simplicius adopted harmonizing strategies developed by his teacher Ammonius.[25] He advises his readers to seek by themselves the inner meaning of Aristotle's text, which is free of dispute.[26] For Simplicius, Aristotle is the most authentic (γνησιώτατος) of Plato's disciples.[27]

Dissenting interpretations, however, were also coming from within the Hellenic philosophical tradition. In a passage on the motion of the heavens, Simplicius opposes the Peripatetic understanding of Aristotle's criticisms of Plato:

> It is my opinion that Alexander from Aphrodisias obviously understands the words of Aristotle well on other occasions—and does so

22 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 85.12–15. See Hoffmann 1987: 76–82.

23 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 84.12–13.

24 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 7.29–32 (trans. Chase 2003, lightly modified).

25 See Golitsis 2008: 197–199; Golitsis 2016b.

26 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Categories* 7.33–8.2.

27 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 378.20–21.

> better than the other Peripatetics—but in the case of the things which Aristotle says concerning Plato, he does not seem to me to respect the purpose of Aristotle's antilogies, which are directed at the appearance (τὸ φαινόμενον) of Plato's statements. But, contesting Plato mischievously in a way, he tries not only, as Aristotle certainly did, to refute the apparent meaning of what Plato says out of concern for the simpler people, but he also attacks the ideas of the divine Plato and tries to draw definite conclusions from what Plato says, frequently not even attending to that apparent meaning. Consequently I, putting forward the truth, which is dear to god and to Aristotle,[28] will here add and try to do a careful investigation of the things which Alexander says are the opinions of Plato about the motion of the soul. I do this because of those who read Alexander's words in a more superficial way and are at risk to be misleadingly set against Plato's doctrines, which is the same as to say against Aristotle's doctrines and against the divine truth.[29]

Simplicius reproaches Alexander of Aphrodisias for failing to see that Aristotle's criticism of Plato (advanced in *On the Heavens* 2.1, 284a27–35) is only apparent. On Alexander's interpretation, Aristotle read Plato disapprovingly as being committed to the view that the heavens are moved by a soul in a violent way. Simplicius argues that what Aristotle really criticized is a false interpretation of *Timaeus* 36 E 2–5, according to which the soul "started her everlasting and rational life," i.e. her circular motion, "after being intertwined (διαπλακεῖσα) with the heavens," an interpretation that has the unfortunate implication that the fifth element, which moves in a circle naturally, must be forced to perform such a motion by the soul. On Simplicius' view, Aristotle criticized those who take this intertwinement to be corporeal, whereas Plato meant only to signify the overall presence of the soul in the body of the heavens. But granted that this explanation is plausible, why should Aristotle bother to make such a criticism?

As said earlier, Simplicius adhered to the pedagogical idea that philosophy had to be instilled into the soul of the novice progressively. He imputed the same idea to Aristotle (and to Plato as well). In his view, Aristotle's criticism of his predecessors was intended to be a real criticism only for unsophisticated readers, who risked being discouraged in their study of philosophy by encountering

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28 Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.6, 1096a16–17.

29 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 377.20–34 (trans. Mueller 2004). The last phrase, which posits the interchangeability of Platonic truth, Aristotelian truth, and divine truth (say, the truth contained in the *Chaldean Oracles*), marvelously summarizes Simplicius' concordist conviction.

difficult philosophical doctrines that seemed absurd if they were not properly understood (e.g. Parmenidean monism or the Platonic doctrine of Forms).[30] In reality, it was such rather superficial interpretations (ἐπιπολαιότεραι ἀκροάσεις) or misunderstandings (παρακοαί) that Aristotle criticized for the benefit of the novice.[31] To give another example, Aristotle, says Simplicius, apparently criticized Plato for having said that the universe is generated (γενητόν); Plato, of course, believed in the everlastingness of the universe and used the word "generated," as is made clear in *Timaeus* 28 A 4–5, in the sense of "what has a cause of its existence (ὑπόστασις)," an existence which need not, of course, occur in time, as common people would think.[32] Simplicius holds that both philosophers criticized their predecessors according to an interpretation that was not theirs out of affection for beginners in philosophy or common people.[33] When the novice would later enter into the deeper meaning of philosophy, he would come to understand that those criticisms were providential discourses.[34]

2.3 *Rescuing Aristotle's Physics*

> Alexander of Aphrodisias, however, did not understand Plato's views as Aristotle understood them, nor did he pay attention to the agreement of the two men as to what they mean, but has been from the outset, so it seems, suspicious toward the writings of Plato, *just as shortly before our time some people have been toward the writings of Aristotle*.[35]

30 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 296.6–9: "We must know that Aristotle, following an old custom, frequently objects to the apparent meaning [of what other philosophers say], whenever this apparent meaning, taken rashly, does not agree with the truth. And he does this in order to help those who understand the old sayings in a more superficial way."

31 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 640.27–31: "The disagreement between the <two> philosophers is in any way not substantial, but Aristotle frequently raises objections against the appearance of what Plato says, which can be also understood in a worse way, and he seems to be refuting Plato for the benefit of those who understand Plato superficially" (trans. Mueller 2011, lightly modified).

32 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 92.33–93.2, 296.12–16.

33 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 148.11–13: "Let no one blame Plato and Aristotle for making their criticisms on the basis of notions different [*sc.* from those meant by the people whom they criticize]. For it is out of humanity that they forestall the misunderstandings which can come about."

34 See Golitsis 2016a.

35 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 297.1–4 (trans. Hankinson 2006, modified).

We can only speculate about the identity of the philosophers whom Simplicius has in mind, when he says that, shortly before him, some people were negatively predisposed against Aristotle. To be sure, there were significant philosophers in late antiquity who openly criticized Aristotle's writings.

Proclus is a case in point. In the prolegomena to his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*, Proclus reproaches Aristotle for setting out a physics that does not go beyond considering enmattered form. Aristotle, says Proclus, added one more auxiliary cause (συναίτιον), namely form, to the auxiliary cause considered by most pre-Platonic philosophers, namely matter.[36] In doing so, Aristotle "fell short of the teaching of his master."[37] For Proclus, it is "Plato alone, who, by preserving the Pythagorean attitude to the philosophy of nature and by fine-tuning their teaching,"[38] delivered with his *Timaeus* all the causes of the universe: not only the receptacle and the enmattered form (i.e. the material and the formal cause, which are subservient to the causes that operate primarily) but also the Intelligence, the Forms, and the Good (i.e. the efficient, the paradigmatic, and the final cause, which are the true causes of the universe).[39] Proclus further ascribes to Aristotle and the Peripatetics (alluding to Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 7.17, 1041a27–32) a failure "to acknowledge that there is a preexisting efficient cause of all natural things at once, and not only of those that are bundled around in generation. For they [sc. the Peripatetics] openly affirm that there is no efficient cause of everlasting things. Here they fail to notice that they are either attributing the complete heavens to spontaneous generation, or declaring that something bodily can be self-productive."[40]

Quite differently from Proclus, Simplicius sees Aristotle's physics not as defective but rather as complementary to Plato's. In the prolegomena to his commentary on the *Physics*, he commends its study as the most beautiful initiation, together with Plato's *Timaeus*, to theology:

> The greatest good of [the study of] physics is that it constitutes the most beautiful way toward the knowledge of the psychic substance and the contemplation of the separate and divine forms. This is something that both Plato, who sets off to discover the self-moving substance [*sc*. the soul] and the intellective and divine essence having started from the natural motions, and Aristotle, who in this very treatise [sc. the *Physics*] investigates the

36 See his account of pre- and postplatonic physics in *On Plato's Timaeus* 1, 2.1–3.19.

37 Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.7.6–16.

38 Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.1.25–27 (trans. Tarrant 2007).

39 Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.2.29–3.4.

40 Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 1.2.24–29 (trans. Tarrant 2007, lightly modified).

> motionless cause of all motion on the basis of the everlastingness of circular motion. Moreover, it warms up [our] reverence toward the divine transcendence, by raising [us] from the accurate understanding of his creations to the marvel and magnificence of the creator.[41]

Contrary to Proclus, Simplicius ascribes to Aristotle complete knowledge of the first causes.[42] Similarly, in his prolegomena to the last book of the *Physics*, he praises Aristotle not only for demonstrating the everlastingness of the universe but also for making physical theory depend on first philosophy or theology, i.e. the philosophy which studies the separate, immaterial forms.[43] Whereas the first point invalidates Philoponus' attempt to the contrary, the second tacitly undermines those of the Hellenes that downgraded Aristotle's physics by claiming that it did not go beyond considering the immanent causes of sublunary things.

The last pages of Simplicius' commentary, which rely on a (lost) monograph of Ammonius, are devoted to rectifying the Peripatetic contention, followed by Proclus in his evaluation of Aristotle, that Aristotle knew of no efficient cause of the heavens.[44] Were this the true doctrine of Aristotle, it could be taken as a serious mistake. For if there was no cause for the everlasting subsistence of the celestial bodies, their supposedly everlasting motion might not be everlasting at all. Indeed, it was a point made by Philoponus that, according to Aristotle's own definition of motion,[45] something is potentially moved before it is actually moved; in other words, its substance (οὐσία) must temporally preexist its activity (ἐνέργεια). The celestial substance, therefore, must preexist its circular motion, which is tantamount to the celestial motion's being generated in time. If, then, the Hellenes wish to continue deducing the eternity of the world from the eternity of its motion, they cannot rely on Aristotle.[46] Simplicius ascribes to Philoponus a failure to distinguish between the following three things: (a) the perfect *dunamis* (ἡ τέλεια δύναμις) of that which acts changelessly;

41 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 5.10–19. Philoponus, we may add following Simplicius, was far from having acquired an accurate understanding (ἀκριβὴς κατανόησις) of the sensible world.

42 Cf. Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 7.17–19: "[Aristotle] posits both an efficient cause, namely the divine intelligence, and a final cause, namely its goodness, for the sake of which the *nous* assimilated the sensible universe to the intelligible paradigm."

43 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1117.6–14. Simplicius is here dependent on Ammonius; see Golitsis 2016b.

44 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1360.24–1363.24; *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 271.13–21.

45 Aristotle, *Physics* 3.1, 201a27–29.

46 Philoponus *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1130.7–29.

(b) the imperfect potentiality (τὸ ἀτελὲς δυνάμει) which is brought to actuality insofar as the substance of the moved object changes; and (c) a middle state (μέση διάθεσις) in which the potentiality of the moved object, unchanging in its substance, runs together (συντρέχει) with the perfect *dunamis*. The heaven, says Simplicius, moves circularly in the same way that fire moves upwards. Its potentiality consists in its changing locally (μετάβασις), whereas its aethereal substance, in accordance with Aristotle's definition of motion, remains prior to its activity, i.e. its circular motion, just as fire has first to *be* fire before it moves upwards.[47]

Simplicius' argument, which he presumably took over from Ammonius, relies on the assumption that substance (or essence) is ontologically prior to motion (or life). If the body of the heavens, being finite, has a finite power with regard to its motion, it must also have a finite power with regard to its subsistence (δύναμις ὑποστατικὴ τῆς οὐσίας). It thus receives the eternity of both its motion and substance from the motionless first mover of *Physics* 8, identified with the *nous* of *Metaphysics* 12 (*Lambda*),[48] which is both the final and efficient cause of the universe.[49] In his commentary on the *Metaphysics*, Ammonius says that for Aristotle *nous* is the single principle of all things (ἡ μία τῶν πάντων ἀρχή),[50] which seems to imply that in his view Aristotle acknowledged no transcendent Good.[51] Simplicius, however, contends that Aristotle believed in a principle higher than *nous*.[52]

Simplicius is the only Neoplatonist who sees Aristotle as a philosopher who fully shared knowledge of the divine truth with Pythagoras and Plato. It is telling that, unlike his predecessors, Simplicius calls Aristotle divine (θεῖος) twice.[53] In his view, Aristotle's physics built on what was achieved before him, while it

47 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1138.29–1140.4.

48 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1360.24–25.

49 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1363.2–8.

50 Ammonius (as published by Asclepius), *On Aristotle's Metaphysics* 105.30–31.

51 This need not be evidence that Ammonius' Neoplatonism underwent a simplification, as Verrycken (1990a: 228–231) claims. Aristotle's doctrine is not Ammonius' *own* doctrine. For a clear reference by Ammonius to the Neoplatonic One, see Ammonius (as published by Philoponus), *On Aristotle's Physics* 163.5–12.

52 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 485.19–22: "Aristotle makes clear that he reflects upon something that transcends both the Intelligence (νοῦς) and the Essence (οὐσία) toward the end of his book *On prayer*, where he says clearly that "god is either Intelligence or also (καὶ) something that transcends Intelligence." Simplicius apparently takes καὶ as separating two different gods (and not as introducing an alternative), i.e. god as *nous* and god as *tagathon*.

53 Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 87.27, and *On Aristotle's On the Physics* 611.8.

remained fully compatible with the theological physics of the *Timaeus*, as well as Plato's theology.

3 Philoponus' Rejection of Aristotle

In AD 517, when he was composing his commentary on the fourth book of Aristotle's *Physics*,[54] Philoponus clearly announced his rejection of Aristotle's authority:

> Let anyone who has the goal of arriving at the truth in all cases gather all his power, lest through the harshness and obscurity of Aristotle's arguments he misses his goal. It is better perhaps first to go through the whole exposition [...] and then take up each of the arguments from the beginning and enquire what truth or falsity is in it, not fearing anything, and not putting the reputation of this man [*sc.* Aristotle] before the truth.[55]

From AD 529 onward, Philoponus made a concerted effort to argue philosophically in favor of creationism.[56] He first refuted, in his *On the Eternity of the World against Proclus*, the eighteen arguments that Proclus presented against the possibility of the world's having been created in time, and then went on to counter, in his *On the Eternity of the World against Aristotle*, the two capital theses of Aristotle which account for the world's everlastingness: (i) the distinctiveness of the celestial substance (as argued in *On the Heavens* 1.2–4 and *Meteorology* 1.3), in which the properties of heavy and light are absent so as to assure its circular motion, to which no contrary motion is shown to exist; and (ii) the eternity of this motion (as exposed in *Physics* 8.1 and 8.10) as a result of its impossibility of having begun in time (for this would yield a *regressio ad infinitum* of its first motion), being therefore perpetually caused by a first mover with infinite power and no magnitude. A third work, a summary of which is preserved in Arabic and is entitled *On the Contingency of the World* [*De contigentia mundi*],[57] argued in favour of creationism in a positive way. Philoponus wrote these treatises mainly for the benefit of a Christian audience but, as we have seen, they had also the side effect of spreading doubt among Pagans about the rightness of their ancestral beliefs.

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54 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 703.16–17.

55 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 650.30–651.4 (trans. Huby 2012, modified).

56 See Bydén 2012.

57 See Pines 1972.

As said before, Philoponus relied on Plato in order to argue that the heavens do not transcend the sublunary world but consist of all four elements.[58] He also denied the existence of infinite causal chains,[59] and claimed that God, unlike nature, can create both the substance and the activity of the universe out of nothing.[60] In his *On the Creation of the World* [*De opificio mundi*], which he probably composed in the 540's, Philoponus says that at the time of creation God implanted a motive force (ὁ δημιουργήσας αὐτοὺς θεὸς κινητικὴν ἐνθεῖναι δύναμιν) in the heavens.[61] He transfers to theology an observation that he first made in his commentary on the *Physics* about the motion of projectiles.[62] This motion, says Philoponus, should not be explained, as Aristotle suggests, with the doctrine of *antiperistasis*, that is, the doctrine that a moving object which is no longer in touch with the mover is moved by the medium through which it moves. Rather, it should be explained by invoking an incorporeal motive force that the mover directly transmits to the moved object (ἀνάγκη κινητικήν τινα δύναμιν ἀσώματον ἐνδιδόσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ ῥιπτοῦντος τῷ ῥιπτουμένῳ)—an explanation that foreran the Renaissance concept of *impetus*. In his commentary on the treatise *On the Soul*, Philoponus argues that, if the world is eternal, as Aristotle believes, then Aristotle is committed to the absurd thesis that actuality and potentiality are simultaneous.[63] In his commentary on the first book of the *Physics*, guarding against Ammonius' explication of the Aristotelian text, Philoponus considers the principle that nothing comes from nothing (which he later refutes in his *On the Eternity of the World against Aristotle*) to be an axiom and not a proof.[64]

Philoponus' opposition to Aristotle began in his activity as a commentator. The existence of a separate fifth element reigning over the celestial region is rejected in his commentary on the first book of *Meteorology*, whereas Aristotle's arguments in favor of the world's eternal motion were refuted earlier in a separate (lost) commentary on the last book of the *Physics*.[65] His *On the Eternity of*

58 Philoponus *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's On the Heavens* 88.31–32: "There is almost nothing observed in the celestial bodies that does not also belong to the bodies among us." On Philoponus' rejection of the so-called fifth element, see Wildberg 1988.

59 Philoponus *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1178.15–1179.26.

60 Philoponus *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1141.11–31.

61 Philoponus, *On the Creation of the World* 28.26–29.1.

62 See Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 639.3–642.26, especially 642.3–9.

63 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 540.27–28.

64 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 191.9–192.2 and below n. 85. Cf. Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World against Proclus* 315.20–22 and 339.25–341.23.

65 Philoponus refers to this separate commentary on book 8 in *On Aristotle's Physics* 458.30–31, 639.7–12 and 762.7–9. It would not be implausible to identify this separate commentary

the World against Aristotle, with its self-explanatory title, can be seen as representing the summit of Philoponus' liberation from Aristotle's authority, a liberation that started during the lectures of his teacher Ammonius and developed throughout his commentaries. In his commentary on *Physics* 4, Philoponus records his master's inadequate defence of Aristotle's definition of place, when he uttered his objections.[66]

Until recently, a correct assessment of Philoponus' interpretation of Aristotle had been impeded by a failure to distinguish between two different activities of Philoponus as a commentator. Philoponus ran, so to speak, two parallel projects: he published posthumously the lectures of his teacher Ammonius on Aristotle (presumably because he was commissioned to do so) and wrote his own commentaries on select books of Aristotle.[67] Modern scholars ascribe to him without qualification commentaries on the following seven Aristotelian writings: *Categories, Prior Analytics, Posterior Analytics, Physics, Meteorology, On Generation and Corruption*, and *On the Soul*. Among these, however, only the commentaries on the *Categories, Physics* 3–4, *On the Soul* 3, and *Meteorology* 1 are evidence of Philoponus' *own* exegetical activity.[68] The commentaries on the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics, Physics* 1–2,[69] *On Generation and Corruption*, and *On the Soul* 1–2, are transcriptions of Ammonius' lectures, which Philoponus enriched with some critical observations of his own (μετά τινων ἰδίων ἐπιστάσεων). Not making the distinction between these two groups of commentaries has led to complex theories about Philoponus' putative intellectual evolution.[70] The ultimate goal of these theories is to resolve the

with Philoponus' treatise "showing that every body is finite and has finite power," which is mentioned by Arabic sources (see Davidson 1969).

66 See Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 583.13–584.4.

67 For an account of this double activity, see Golitsis 2017.

68 This order reflects the chronological order in which Philoponus composed his commentaries, as is established by cross-references. Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 414.21–22, refers back to *On Aristotle's Categories* 23.8–13, whereas *On Aristotle's On the Soul* 528.34, refers back both to *On Aristotle's Physics* and *On Aristotle's Categories*. Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Meteorology* 35.18–19, refers back to *On Aristotle's Physics* 4. The commentary on *Physics* 3–4, as said earlier, refers back to a separate commentary on *Physics* 8, which is not extant.

69 It is doubtful whether the *scholia* on *Physics* 5–8 edited under Philoponus' name by Vitelli 1888 are by Philoponus.

70 The most prominent attempt of this sort was made in Verrycken 1990b, which distinguishes between an "earlier" and a "later" Philoponus, the latter partially revising the writings of the former. Verrycken 2010 still holds this view, without addressing the various objections levelled against the overall reconstruction.

contradictions that emerge from his commentaries. These contradictions vanish, however, if we distinguish, as the titles of the commentaries invite us to do, between Ammonius' and Philoponus' views and, within the commentaries that are a record of Ammonius' lectures, between Ammonius' opinions and Philoponus' criticism of Ammonius.

It is reasonable to assume that it was Philoponus' gradual abandonment of Ammonius' interpretation that led him to his criticism of Aristotle.[71] Making a critical observation (ἐπίστασις) to Ammonius' commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*, Philoponus expresses, for instance, his disbelief at Ammonius' contention that Aristotle criticized not Plato's doctrine of Forms but a false interpretation of Plato's doctrine of Forms.[72] He describes this interpretation of Aristotle's criticism (which, as we saw, is endorsed by Simplicius) as a fiction in his work *On the Eternity of the World against Proclus*.[73]

3.1 *Philoponus' Novelty as an Exegete of Aristotle*

Philoponus' novelty did not only consist of his interpretation of Aristotle's philosophy but also of his approach to exegesis itself. In the prolegomena to his commentary on the *Categories*, he makes a subtle distinction between explicating the true sense of Aristotle's text and judging whether Aristotle's view corresponds to the true nature of things:

> The commentator should neither, on account of good will, try to make sense of what is badly said as though receiving it from a tripod, nor should he, on account of hatred, take in a bad sense what is said beautifully. He should rather try to be a dispassionate judge of what is said and he should first explain the meaning of the ancient text and interpret the doctrines of Aristotle, and then go on to express his own judgment [on how things are] (τὴν παρ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐπιφέρειν κρίσιν).[74]

Whereas the remarks made in the first part of the passage can be found in other commentators, the method sketched in the second part is Philoponus'

71 Wildberg 1999 argues that Philoponus' novel theories were due to his liberation from fundamental concepts of the Neoplatonic hermeneutics of his time (as exemplified by Simplicius), namely harmony, authority, and salvation. The harmony between Plato and Aristotle, and the acceptance of Aristotle as an authority, were taught to Philoponus (and to Simplicius) by Ammonius.

72 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Posterior Analytics* 242.26–243.21.

73 Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World against Proclus* 29.2–13.

74 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Categories* 6.30–35.

innovation. According to this method, the interpreter is required *first* to explain the Aristotelian text and *then* to express his own judgements as to how things really are.[75] This novel method is implemented in his commentary on *Physics* 4. There, Philoponus puts forward his own view of place (in the so-called *Corollary on Place*)[76] as being mere dimensions void of bodies (διαστάσεις μόναι κεναὶ σώματος)[77] only after he has articulated Aristotle's arguments against the conception of place as extension (διάστημα) and has explained the Aristotelian definition of place as the first limit of the surrounding body (*Physics* 4.4, 212a20–21).[78] A similar situation can be observed in the treatment of void. Philoponus *first* sets out Aristotle's claim that motion through the void is impossible and *then* sets forth his own view (in the so-called *Corollary on Void*)[79] that Aristotle's arguments are invalid and that motion would be altogether impossible if the void did not exist. For the three-dimensional (τὸ τριχῇ διαστατόν) that underlies both the body-in-motion and the body-medium, as they reciprocally change place, is not a body itself (for how could a three-dimensional body be in a three-dimensional body?) but rather is void.[80]

To conclude this brief review, I would like to recall the distinction that Philoponus introduces between two kinds of quantity, i.e. spatial extension and bodily extension.[81] Although the first, which can be named either place (τόπος) or void (κενόν), is not naturally observed without the second (but it can be mentally abstracted from it), it is an entity of its own. In support of this view, Philoponus advances as an empirical proof the so-called force against the void (ἡ τοῦ κενοῦ βία), that is, nature's constraint not to let the void be

75 See Golitsis 2008: 199–200.

76 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 557.8–585.4.

77 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 567.30–33: "Place (τόπος) is a sort of extension in three dimensions, which is different from the bodies that fall in it, since it is incorporeal in its own definition and mere dimensions void of body; for the void and the place, as what underlies [bodies], are really the same thing."

78 Not taking into account these two different moments in Philoponus' method, Verrycken 1990b was led to posit the existence of manifest contradictions in the commentary, which he tried to explain through its partial revision.

79 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 675.12–695.8. In a nutshell, Philoponus argues that the unequal speed of motions, which in Aristotle's view would be impossible through the void, is not necessarily caused by the medium in which the bodies move but also by the gravitation (ῥοπή) of bodies.

80 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 693.30–694.12.

81 See Sedley 1987.

without body.[82] From this phenomenon, Philoponus infers the existence of an extension other than bodily extension, which bodies precipitate to fill in. Here Philoponus subverts, in full consciousness, the primacy of substance according to the Aristotelian theory of the categories; place (τόπος) is nothing but quantity-itself; in other words, quantity without substance:

> Perhaps one might wish to raise the following objection to our account, [...] namely that if place is an extension exempt from all substance and matter having its being in mere dimensions, and dimensions belong to quantity, it will happen that quantity exists separately without substance. But this is impossible; for all other categories have their being in the [category of] substance. If, therefore, it is impossible for quantity to subsist by itself without belonging to a substance, it is impossible for such an extension to exist. I then reply [to this objection] that it is most necessary not that the nature of things follow our theses but that our assumptions agree with the [nature of] things. It is not because we have declared to ourselves that it is impossible for a quantity to exist without a substance that it is immediately necessary that the nature of things is so too.[83]

Philoponus later identified mere bodily extension, i.e. qualityless body, with prime matter.[84] He thus rejected, following the Stoics and against the traditional view held by Proclus, the existence of a formless matter (that is, matter that does not even have three dimensions) as the first substrate of qualityless bodies. Although he explicitly says so only of matter,[85] it is reasonable to assume that he considered spatial extension, in which the universe exists, to have been equally created by God.

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82 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 569.18–20: "Moreover, the force against the void will show clearly to whom looks at the truth both things: (i) that the extension is an entity (τι) different from the bodies that fall in it, and (ii) that this extension is never [left] without a body."

83 Philoponus, *On Aristotle's Physics* 578.5–15.

84 Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World against Proclus* 445.7–13.

85 Philoponus *apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 1141.19–22: "If, then, god gives subsistence to the matter as well [as to the form], and matter does not need any other matter in order to exist (for it is itself the first substrate of all natural things), it is not true that everything that is created is created out of a being."

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CHAPTER 22

Aristoteles Latinus: The Reception of Aristotle in the Latin World

Christophe Erismann

1 Introduction

Although the history of the reception of Aristotle in the Latin-speaking world goes back to the first century BC,[1] the literary production of translations and paraphrases of the Aristotelian works, as well as that of commentaries on those works, is clearly a late antique phenomenon. All extant texts date to late antiquity, mainly to the period from the fourth to the sixth century AD. Moreover, with the exception of a translation of the Ps-Aristotelian treatise *On the Cosmos* [*De mundo*], attributed to Apuleius, they all pertain to logic. We can distinguish three main phases of activity during this period:

(1) Roman Logic in North Africa (*acme* during the fourth century AD)
(2) The Graeco-Latin Logic of Boethius (late fifth and early sixth century AD)
(3) The Scholarly Logic of the Encyclopaedists (*acme* during the sixth century AD)

This reduction of Aristotle's philosophy to logic is the first of five distinctive traits of the reception of Aristotle in the Latin world. The drastic restriction of the parts of the *corpus aristotelicum* selected for serious discussion is among the most noticeable differences between the Latin and the Greek reception of Aristotle. In particular, while authors such as Simplicius and Philoponus read and commented not only on the *Categories* but also on the *Physics* and *On the Soul*, the literary production of the Latin world focused exclusively on the *Organon*, augmented by Porphyry's *Isagoge*. This exclusive focus determined the nature of the Latin philosophical thought until the twelfth century. That is not to say that interest in Aristotle's logic was specific to the Latin West (it was clearly not), but that this exclusivity was. Critical engagement with Aristotle's

* I would like to express my gratitude to Byron MacDougall and Andrea Falcon for their insightful remarks on a previous version of this text, and to Zoli Filotas for his editorial assistance.

1 For a useful overview of the early reception of Aristotle in the Latin world, see André 2013.

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logic was conspicuous both in the Greek and in the Latin tradition. In particular, late antiquity was a golden age for reading the *Categories*. Although the Greek tradition was less restrictive in its approach to Aristotle, it remained fundamentally engaged with the *Categories*, which was an essential part of the ancient philosophical curriculum. Evidence of this continuous engagement is the fact that we still have commentaries on the *Categories* by Porphyry, Dexippus, Ammonius, Simplicius, Olympiodorus, Philoponus, and David.[2]

A second distinctive trait is the lack of open polemic. In the Latin tradition, there are no explicit attacks on Aristotelian positions comparable to Plotinus' treatise on the genera of being (a thorough and harsh critique of the *Categories* transmitted in *Enneads* 6.1–3 [40–42]), or to the lost treatise on the eternity of the world against Aristotle, in which Philoponus criticized the *Physics* and the treatise *On the Heavens*. This clearly attests that the perspective of Latin readers was influenced by Porphyry's claim of the harmony between the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, and the view that the ostensible differences between them could be explained by the difference of objects under consideration: Plato concerned himself with the intelligible world, whereas Aristotle centred his work on the sensible world and how to speak about it as sensibly perceived. For the Latins, Aristotelianism under the precise form of Aristotelian logic was compatible with both Christian thought (Marius Victorinus and Boethius used Aristotelian logic as theologians) and Platonic philosophy.

A third distinctive trait relates to the literary genre of the texts written in Latin. With the exception of Boethius' commentaries, most texts were short and scholarly in nature (most if not all were for the sake of *teaching* Aristotle), with a content of moderate complexity and erudition, quite distant from the level of sophistication reached in the Greek exegetical writings.

The Christian faith of the authors of these texts—Marius Victorinus, Boethius, and Cassiodorus—is a fourth particularity. While the technical study of Aristotle in the Greek-speaking East—with the notable exception of John Philoponus and the last generation of the Alexandrian masters (David and Elias)—was led by thinkers who were more or less explicitly pagan, the Latin tradition was entirely built by Christian authors.[3] This does not mean that the Christian faith of the translators or commentators appears in their work. Boethius, for example, does not reveal his Christian faith in his commentaries. This remark should however be complemented by another, which is not

2 For more on the reception of Aristotle's *Categories* in late antiquity, I refer the reader to chapters 16 (Porphyry and the Aristotelian Tradition), 20 (Ammonius and the Alexandrian School), and 21 (Simplicius and Philoponus on the Authority of Aristotle) of this volume.

3 Due to unsolved attribution problems, it remains unclear whether "Apuleius"' *On Interpretation* [*Peri Hermeneias*] and the treatise *Categoriae decem* were written by Christians.

directly related to the "professional" interpreters of the Aristotelian texts but applies more generally to Christian theology: Latin patristic thought, just like Greek patristic thought, sets up a critical yet fruitful dialogue with philosophical thought, questioning the relevance and the limits of the use of logic in theology. The two homonymous treatises *On the Trinity* by Augustine[4] and Boethius[5] are excellent examples of this phenomenon.

The fifth particularity pertains to the fact that the Latin reception of Aristotle developed *in Latin*. This means that it was necessary first to create and then to codify a lexicon in order to express Greek philosophical concepts. Let us mention just one example, already noted by Carl Prantl: Cicero names propositions containing positive and negative statements *aientia* and *negantia*, "Apuleius"[6] *dedicativae* and *abdicativae*, Boethius *affirmationes* and *negationes*. Boethius' contribution on this front was particularly significant and influential. His renderings of the original Greek were adopted by the subsequent medieval tradition.

The late ancient Latin reception of Aristotle includes translations (by Marius Victorinus and, especially, Boethius), commentaries (all by Boethius), paraphrases (which were often very influential in the early Middle Ages), short essays on specific topics (again, mostly by Boethius) and encyclopaedic contributions. These writings, several of which became, under the collective name of *logica vetus*, the body of philosophical reference texts for Latin authors of the Middle Ages until the twelfth century,[7] mark important stages of the *translatio studiorum*—the movement of cultural transmission and translation—from Greek antiquity to Latin scholasticism.

Before discussing in more depth the three stages of the Latin reception of Aristotle highlighted above, it may be useful to have a quick look at a table presenting the Latin production in the field of logic until the sixth century AD.[8] Porphyry's *Isagoge* has been included in the table because the history of this text cannot be separated from that of the *Organon*, of which it became a part of almost equal importance as Aristotle's treatises themselves.

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4 On the relation of Augustine to Aristotelian logic (mainly the *Categories*), see the articles by Lössl, O'Daly, and Erismann in Bermon and O'Daly 2012.

5 See Libera 2005.

6 I write "Apuleius" following a typographical practice of the series *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle* to express doubts about the attribution of this work, yet indicating the ascription currently in use. See below, for a discussion of the case of Apuleius.

7 See Marenbon 2008 and 2013.

8 This table is a modified and extended version (in particular by the addition of the encyclopaedists) of that provided in Ebbesen 2008: 107.

	Translations	Commentaries	Paraphrases and related texts	Summaries in encyclopaedias
Porphyry, *Isagoge*	Marius Victorinus, Boethius (AL 1.6)	2 commentaries by Boethius, one on Victorinus' translation, the other on his own	Marius Victorinus, *On Definitions* [*De definitionibus*],[9] Boethius, *On Division* [*De divisione*]	Martianus Capella (*On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury* [*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*], book 4, §§344–354, 157–163 Dick), Cassiodorus (*Institutions* [*Institutiones*] 2.8, 112–3 Mynors) and Isidore of Seville (*Etymologies* [*Etymologiae*] book 2.25, 1.9–9, 27 Lindsay; see also 29, *On the Division of Definitions* [*De divisione definitionum*])
Categories	Marius Victorinus (?) Boethius (AL 1.1–2)	1 commentary by Boethius (perhaps 2[10])	*Ten Categories* [*Categoriae decem*] (also known as *Paraphrasis Themistiana*)	Martianus Capella (*On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury* [*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*], book 4, §§ 355–387, 164–184), Cassiodorus (*Institutions* [*Institutiones*] 2.9–10, 113–4), Isidore of Seville (*Etymologiae*, book 2.26; see also 31, *On the Opposites* [*De oppositis*])

9 The theory of definitions is attached to logic through the Aristotelian doctrine of the so-called five predicables, i.e. genus, species, difference, *proprium*, and accident. Among the many types of definitions offered by Victorinus, substantial definition alone really belongs to logic.

10 See Hadot 1959.

	Translations	Commentaries	Paraphrases and related texts	Summaries in encyclopaedias
On Interpretation	Marius Victorinus (?) Boethius (AL II.1)	2 commentaries by Boethius	"Apuleius," *On Interpretation* [*Peri Hermeneias*]	Martianus Capella (*On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury* [*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*], book 4, §§ 388–405, 184–197), Cassiodorus (*Institutions* [*Institutiones*] 2.11, 114–5), Isidore of Seville (*Etymologies* [*Etymologiae*] book 2.27)
Prior Analytics	Boethius (AL III.1–2)		"Apuleius," *On Interpretation* [*Peri Hermeneias*], Boethius, *On Categorical Syllogisms* [*De syllogismis categoricis*][11]	Martianus Capella (*On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury* [*De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*] book 4, §§ 406–413, 197–202), Cassiodorus (*Institutions* [*Institutiones*] 2.12–14, 115–24), Isidore of Seville (*Etymologies* [*Etymologiae*] book 2.28, *On Dialectical Syllogisms* [*De syllogismis dialecticis*]).

11 The texts pertaining to hypothetical syllogisms are not included in this table because they belong to a larger extent to the tradition of Cicero's *Topics* [*Topica*] and to the discussion of places *ex consequentibus, ex antecedentibus*, and *ex repugnantibus* as well as to Stoic logic.

(*cont.*)

	Translations	Commentaries	Paraphrases and related texts	Summaries in encyclopaedias
Topics	Boethius (AL V.1–2)		Boethius, *On Topical Differentiae* [*De topicis differentiis*][12]	Cassiodorus (*Institutions* [*Institutiones*] 2.15–16, 125–7, based to a larger extent on Cicero), Isidore of Seville (*Etymologies* [*Etymologiae*] book 2.30)[13]
Sophistical Refutations	Boethius (AL VI.1)			

2 Roman Logic in North Africa

The first Aristotelizing texts to be produced in the Latin tradition, although not purely Aristotelian, were written in North Africa—then a Latin intellectual centre—between the second and the fourth century AD.[14] Their philosophical content pertained, first and foremost, to the doctrine of the categories and to syllogistic. They are characterized by the influence of rhetoric.

2.1 "Apuleius"' *On Interpretation*

The oldest treatise of logic extant in Latin is a short work on the theory of categorical syllogisms called *On Interpretation* [*Peri Hermeneias*] and attributed with much uncertainty to the second-century Platonic philosopher and specialist of rhetoric Apuleius of Madaura (*ca.* 125–171). Recent scholarship

12 The tradition of Cicero's *Topics* [*Topica*] is not taken into account.

13 Martianus Capella deals with Aristotle's *Topics* in his exposition of rhetoric and not of logic.

14 Augustine (354–430) may be added to the three authors discussed in this section. Born in Thagaste and educated in Carthage, Augustine composed a treatise *On Dialectic* [*De dialectica*], and discussed the categories in his treatise *On Trinity* [*De trinitate*], Books 5–7). We may also recall Tullius Marcellus Carthaginensis, whom Cassiodorus (*Inst.* 2, 3, 13, Mynors 119) presents as the author of a treatise on categorical and hypothetical syllogisms [*De categoricis et hypotheticis syllogismis*], unfortunately lost.

has presented this text as the third book of Apuleius' treatise *On Plato and his Doctrine* [*De Platone et eius dogmate*],[15] which offers in the first two books respectively physics (*philosophia naturalis*) and ethics (*philosophia moralis*). With the addition of a third book on logic (*philosophia rationalis*), we obtain a philosophical system that is in line with the Hellenistic (mainly Stoic) division of philosophy into logic, physics, and ethics. "Apuleius" makes contact with this tripartite division of philosophy in the first sentence of the treatise, where he says "[t]he study of wisdom, which we call philosophy, seems to most people to have three species or parts: the natural (*naturalem*), the moral (*moralem*), and the rational (*rationalem*), in which the art of arguing (*ars disserendi*) is contained, and which I have proposed to treat at this point" (1, 82.1–3, trans. Londey Johanson). However, as already noted by G. F. Holdebrand and A. Goldbacher, the first critical editors of our text, the hypothesis that our text was an integral part of Apuleius' *On Plato and his Doctrine* is contradicted by the manuscript tradition, the style of the work, and its doctrinal coherence.[16] In all probability, it was the work of an unknown logician active in the third or fourth century (the *terminus ante quem* is the use of this work by Martianus Capella), which was subsequently attributed to Apuleius. This explanation has the advantage of being in line with the historical fact that there was no need to translate Greek scientific and philosophical writings into Latin before the fourth century AD, as every well-educated reader in the Latin world would be able to read Greek. By contrast, the appearance of Latin translations or summaries of Greek texts is a sign of the emerging split between two cultural and political spheres of influence, a separation institutionalized by the settling of the emperor in Constantinople in AD 330. Finally, the assumption that the *On Interpretation* is not the third book of Apuleius' *On Plato and his Doctrine* may find confirmation in the recent claim that this missing third book is to be identified with a philosophical text contained in the Vatican manuscript *Reg. lat*. 1572.[17]

Our treatise is both doctrinally interesting and historically important.[18] Among other things, it contains the first Latin formulation of the square of opposition, the logical scheme which represents contradictory propositions organized according to their quality (affirmative vs negative propositions) and

15 Johanson 1983: 131–134.

16 On the pro and cons, see the summary offered Londey and Johanson 1987: 11–19.

17 See https://classicalstudies.org/annual-meeting/146/abstract/new-work-apuleius and Stover 2016.

18 See Conso 2001.

their quantity (particular vs universal propositions).[19] The text was abundantly used by Martianus Capella during the first third of the fifth century in his influential *On the Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, and was copied as one of the reference texts on logic during the early Latin Middle Ages. Despite its title, however, its content only covers the material of Aristotle's *On Interpretation* in part. While "Apuleius" indeed deals with Aristotle's *On Interpretation* 1–7, he largely disregards chapters 8–14. Instead, he includes part of the *Prior Analytics* (in particular book 1, chapters 1 to 8, where the theory of assertoric syllogism is presented), as well as some elements from the *Topics* (the explanation of the doctrine of the so-called predicables is close to *Topics* 1.8).[20] I will not discuss the philosophical significance of the logic and of the theory of propositions presented in our text.[21] Here suffice it to note that, in calling a proposition a declarative utterance (*oratio pronuntiabilis*), "Apuleius" reverses Aristotle's order of priority in logic. For Aristotle, logic was first and foremost about *reasoning* correctly, and only secondarily about speaking correctly; for the author of our treatise, logic is first and foremost about *speaking* correctly. This shift from reasoning to speaking is reflected in Martianus Capella, according to whom the first part of logic concerns speech.

2.2 *Marius Victorinus*

The rhetorician Marius Victorinus (*ca.* 280–365) is the best example of the renewal of interest in Aristotle's logic in the fourth century AD, as well as an excellent illustration of the peculiar perspective on the nature of logic adopted by the authors of the logical works that were produced during this time. Marius was working in the Roman dialectical tradition of Cicero, Quintilian, and Varro. He was also influenced by Stoicism. In his eyes, logic was closely related to rhetoric; as such, it was the science of *saying* things well. As a result of this approach, his logic was more topical than categorical: the key text for him was not the *Categories* but rather the *Topics*. The study of the *Isagoge*, the *Categories*, and *On Interpretation* did not lead to the study of Aristotle's syllogistic and its use in the theory of demonstration, but rather to Cicero's *Topics*.

19 A proposition is universal when the predicate is affirmed (or denied) of every individual denoted by the subject (e.g. "all cats"). A proposition is particular when the predicate is affirmed (or denied) of only a part of the extension of the subject.

20 Londey and Johanson (1987: 5): "The principal subject of the *Peri Hermeneias* is the formal logic of subject-predicate propositions—including their classification and their logical relations with one another, and the theory of assertoric syllogism."

21 For an in-depth discussion of our treatise and its philosophical significance, I refer the reader to Sullivan 1967.

Marius Victorinus produced a Latin translation of Porphyry's *Isagoge*. This translation is now lost but it can be reconstructed at least in part from the use that Boethius made of it in his first commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*.[22] Cassiodorus also attributes to him a translation of the *Categories* and *On Interpretation*, but there is absolutely no trace of these translations. Marius' work as a translator is important from a doctrinal point of view. He was the first to translate ἐνδέχεται as *contingit*, thus paving the way for Boethius' translation of ἐνδεχόμενον as *contingens*. In particular, Marius offers the following Latin translation of Porphyry's definition of the accident to capture the fact that an accident comes and goes without implying the destruction of its subject: *accidens est quod contingit alicui et esse et non esse* (101.18 Brandt). Moreover, it was Marius who established the meaning of *contingent* to express accidentality,[23] whereas the classical sense of *contingere* was "to happen" or "to take place."

Arguably, the most significant contribution of Marius Victorinus to the history of Aristotelian logic was not as a translator of Aristotle but as an interpreter of his logic. In particular, he contributed to the expansion of the use of logic in theological contexts. In this he was a true innovator, whose work revealed to the Latins how logic could be put to the service of theology, a practice which was common in the Greek world, where participants in Christian theological controversies were used to having recourse to logic.[24] One example will suffice to illustrate how he employed Aristotle's logic in theological matters. In order to demonstrate that it is incorrect to invoke the concept of "similar substance" (ὁμοιούσιος) instead of the concept of "same substance" (ὁμοούσιος) in connection with the theological discussions about the nature of divine trinity, Victorinus introduced the following argument: there can be no resemblance of substances without categorical confusion because resemblance belongs to the category of quality. It is only identity (or difference) that is relevant to the category of substance.[25] Here is one of the many formulations Marius gives of this argument:

> Someone says that this is being of similar substance, and not being consubstantial. But we have already stated that we cannot speak of similarity of substances and that this does not exist, insofar as a substance is

22 Monceaux 1909. In his edition of Boethius' first commentary, S. Brandt notes which passages originate in Marius Victorinus' translation (Schepps and Brandt 1966: 63–68. See also Hadot 1971: 371–380 ["L'"Isagoge" de Marius Victorinus"]).

23 Becker and Freyseng 1938.

24 Hadot 1971: 195.

25 Cf. Erismann 2012b: 181–190.

> substantial. Moreover, if we talk about resemblance in one substance, we say that the substance is identical, but we cannot say that it is similar. Similarity is only stated of qualities. For example, fire and air are substances; according to substance, they are identical, for they are both *hylê*; but they are similar or dissimilar through their qualities; for example they are similar in their movement, their power and other things; in the same way, earth and water are dissimilar through weight, density and other such qualities. In these elements, the following also happens: all things that are similar are at the same time dissimilar, through different qualities.[26]

This argument relies on an Aristotelian doctrine presented in the *Categories*. More directly, Marius Victorinus takes as his starting point the Aristotelian definition of what is proper to qualities: "it is in virtue of qualities only that things are called similar and dissimilar; a thing is not similar to another in virtue of anything but that in virtue of which it is qualified. So it would be distinctive of quality that a thing is called similar or dissimilar in virtue of it" (*Categories* 8, 11a15–19, trans. Ackrill).

2.3 *The Anonymous Treatise* Categoriae decem

One text plays a particular role in the Latin reception of the theory of categories: the short work entitled *Ten Categories* [*Categoriae decem*], which is also known as *Paraphrasis Themistiana* because the author claims to be a disciple of Themistius. Evidence from the text allows us to date this work to the fourth century AD; it was for a long time attributed to Augustine, and circulated during the Middle Ages under the name of the bishop of Hippo (this attribution dates back to Alcuin, who dedicated his edition of this treatise to Charlemagne around 790). The placement under the revered authority of the bishop of Hippo guaranteed our treatise considerable influence, to the point that for several centuries it was seen as more important than Boethius' translation of the *Categories*. It was transmitted as part of the body of texts collectively known as *logica vetus*. As a result, it was abundantly glossed during the first centuries of the Middle Ages and remained a reference text until the twelfth century.

It remains unclear whether this treatise was translated from the Greek or whether it was originally written in Latin. Evidence for the attribution to Augustine is difficult to find, and various hypotheses have been formulated about the identity of the author of this thesis: Vettius Agorius Praetextatus (*ca.* 320–384), a senator and anti-Christian philosopher; a certain Albinus,

26 Marius Victorinus, *Against Arius* [*Adversus Arium*] 1, 41.1–18. My translation.

whose name may have been altered to Augustinus during the text transmission process; or even Marius Victorinus. It has also been argued that this text is a Latin version of the lost Greek paraphrases of the *Categories* produced by Themistius. None of these hypotheses is fully convincing.

This treatise is neither a translation of nor a commentary on the *Categories*. Rather, it is a sharp and opinionated paraphrase containing several original philosophical contributions; various passages depart significantly from Aristotle's text. The text insists on the bodily character of substance understood as a substrate. It debates the applicability of the category of quality to other categories and advocates the thesis that there is no exception to the property of convertibility of relations. For a particularly interesting example both of the relation of our text to that of Aristotle and of the interventionist character of the author of the *Categoriae decem*, we can point to a strong epistemological and ontological thesis contained in the Latin treatise that we can formulate as follows:

> substances are perceived through the senses, contrary to accidents, which are perceived by the mind, because they change.

Such a statement, counter-intuitive as it is, is found nowhere in Aristotle. In fact, it patently contradicts Aristotelian principles, and in particular the view that accidents are perceived by the senses and substances by the intellect. Instead, for our author, when we see, touch, or smell Socrates, we perceive his humanity. Since his humanity is composed of essential qualities, we supposedly perceive the essential qualities of Socrates through the senses, whereas his accidental qualities elude us because of their ontological instability. In other words, a substance is a substance because it is subject to the senses. This thesis presupposes the link between *substantia* and *corpus* and the equivalence between having a substance (*substantiam habere*) and having a body (*corpus habere*), which was well-established in Roman philosophy since Seneca.[27] As a consequence, being a substance implies having a body, as corporality is the condition for substantiality; it is only that of which we can have sensible experience that can be a substance. The author of our text defends his position as follows:

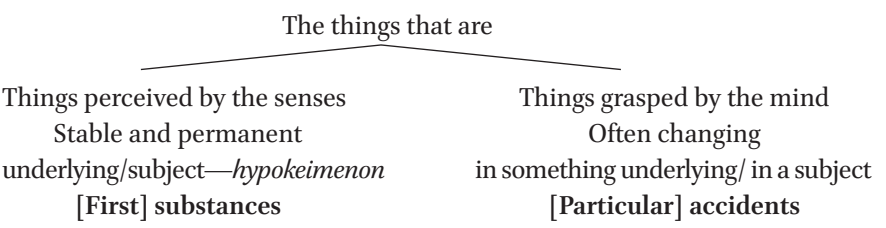
> We still have to talk about the way in which Aristotle dealt with things that are. These are the things that we perceive through the senses or that we gather in our mind or thought. We perceive through the senses the

27 On the link between *substantia* and *corpus* in Roman philosophy, see Courtine 2003.

> things that we know by seeing, touching, hearing, tasting or [even] smelling them. [We gather] in our mind for instance when, having seen a horse, a man, or any other animal, while we know that its body is one, we still think that it is composed of several parts. For the head is a part, the feet are another, and the same goes for all the other body parts; in the head itself, ears are proper parts, the tongue also; and if they are taken in themselves, these parts have many other parts that can be divided and separated, such that flesh is a part, and others are skin, veins, nerves and hair. So we gather in our mind or intellect these things to which our senses do not give us access.
>
> We also consider these things and we know, through concentration of our thought, that men and other animals grow, get old, sometimes stand still, sometimes walk, sometimes are caught by anguish, sometimes relax with a serene soul, sometimes benefit from good health, sometimes feel pain, change colours, going from black to white or from white to black, become skilled while they were maladroit, become knowledgeable while they were ignorant, become cruel while they were kind, or kind while they were cruel.
>
> So this is why, among the things that are, some are perceived by the senses, the others by the mind; knowledgeable men have preferred to separate them with proper [i.e., adequate, specific] names; they have chosen to name "*ousia*" (οὐσία) that which is known through the senses and "*sumbebêkos*" (συμβεβηκός), that is, accident, that which is reached through consideration of the mind and changes often. And, as we know that accidents inhere in the permanent *ousia* in which they come to existence, they chose to call this *ousia* "*hypokeimenon*" (ὑποκείμενον), that is, subject, and not "*in something in a subject*", and, as to these [properties] that accidents are, they referred to them as "in an *hypokeimenon*," that is, in something that is a subject.[28]

The author of the *Ten Categories* completely reformulates the Aristotelian division of beings. There are two kinds of beings that he admits in his particularist ontology: first substances and particular accidents. This ontology is called "particularist" because it only admits the existence of particulars. Secondary substances cannot be true substances if being perceptible through the senses is the criterion for substantiality; after all, universals are not corporeal beings. This division of beings can be represented with the following diagram:

28 *Ten Categories* 27–30, 139.9–140.9. My translation.



In light of the above division, we can generate the following definitions of substance (οὐσία) and accident (συμβεβηκός): (1) a substance is that which is known through the senses and is permanent; (2) an accident is that which is grasped by the mind and changes often. The most important ontological consequence of these definitions is the reformulation of the priority given to individual substances. The priority of primary substances is strengthened by the priority given to what is corporeal and perceptible through the senses. This idea is echoed by Boethius, in his commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*:

> Since this book [sc. the *Categories*] deals with the meaning of words (*nomina*), this is why [Aristotle] refers correctly to that to which words were applied in the first place as 'primary substances'; for words were first applied to what was primarily submitted to the senses. Individuals are the first things to become objects of the senses; thus he [sc. Aristotle] rightly introduced them as first in his division.[29]

3 The Graeco-Latin Logic of Boethius

Boethius (*ca.* 470–524) is the author who undoubtedly did the most to promote the diffusion of Aristotle's logic in the Latin world.[30] He conceived an ambitious program of producing translations and commentaries for the whole body of Platonic and Aristotelian texts. His ultimate goal was to demonstrate the fundamental agreement between Plato and Aristotle.[31] With this program, Boethius alligned his work as a translator and a commentator with the philosophical outlook of late antiquity. This outlook was inspired by Porphyry and his philosophical project of integrating Aristotle and Plato into a single philosophical position.[32] His premature death prevented him from completing this

29 *On Aristotle's Categories* 183 D. My translation.

30 For a useful and thorough overview of his work, see Marenbon 2003.

31 On the agreement between Plato and Aristotle according to Boethius, see Zambon 2003.

32 On Porphyry and his philosophical project, I refer the reader to chapter 16 of this volume.

program. However, he was able to finish a set of translations and commentaries on the texts of the *Organon*.[33] In particular, Boethius translated the *Categories*, preceded by Porphyry's *Isagoge, On Interpretation*, the *Prior Analytics*, the *Topics*, and the *Sophistical Refutations*. He composed two commentaries on the *Isagoge*, one on the *Categories* and two on *On Interpretation*.

Through his work as a commentator, Boethius transmitted important elements of the Greek exegetical tradition on Aristotle to the Latin world, in particular Porphyry's contribution, to which he is particularly indebted.[34] Boethius' commentary on the *Categories* and his major commentary on the treatise *On Interpretation* are apparently close to Porphyry's exegesis (even if this is difficult to assess precisely, as both long commentaries by Porphyry on these texts are lost). Boethius also produced original work. His commentaries contain several remarkable philosophical doctrines. Among the most interesting, we can cite his abstractionist theory of universals, his anti-realist arguments,[35] his solution to the problem of contingent futures, and his reflection on the concept of the form of the individual. In his second commentary to Porphyry's *Isagoge* (and to an even greater extent in his *Consolation of Philosophy*), Boethius defends a position that is best described as "realist abstractionism," according to which it is only by conceiving universals that human thought properly grasps the form by which particulars belong to this or that species or genus.[36]

In order to illustrate Boethius' original contribution, method of work, and relationship to his sources, let us concentrate on his exegesis of Aristotle's famous definition of universal (καθόλου) and particular (καθ'ἕκαστον) given at the outset of *On Interpretation* 7:

> Since of things some are universal, others particular—I call universal what is naturally predicated of a number of things, and particular what is not: e.g. man is universal, Plato a singular—it is necessary to state that something is or is not, sometimes of a universal, sometimes of a singular.[37]

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33 On Boethius as a translator and a commentator of Aristotle's *Organon*, see Ebbesen 2009. Cf. Minio-Paluello 1972, Shiel 1990, and Asztalos 1992.

34 Boethius acknowledged his debt in his second commentary on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*: "We have arranged our explication of this work in Latin following Porphyry as far as possible, although we have included material from others too. For Porphyry, our guide, seems pre-eminent in intellectual sharpness and ability to marshal his ideas" (*On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 7.5–9, trans. Smith).

35 King 2011.

36 Marenbon 2012: 9–20. Cf. de Libera 1999: 159–280.

37 Aristotle, *On Interpretation* 7, 17a38–b3. Boethius replaces Aristotle's example of a particular (Callias) with his own (Plato).

In order to elaborate on the universality or particularity of the subjects of propositions, Boethius offers some remarks on the topic of qualities that make use of a doctrine he finds in Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and thus adds a new theoretical dimension to his discussion. He starts by introducing a distinction between particular qualitative properties—that is, qualities that belong to and can be predicated of only one individual—and universal qualitative properties—that is, qualities that belong to and can be predicated of all the members of a given species or genus:

> For we see that there are some qualities in things of the kind that cannot fit anything other than some one singular or particular substance; for one kind of quality is singular, e.g. to Plato or Socrates; and there is another which is shared with more than one and gives itself in its entirety to individuals and to all, e.g. humanity itself. For there is a quality of the kind that is in its entirety both in singulars and in all. For whenever we think of something like this in our mind, in our mental processes we are not led by this name to some one person, but to all who share the definition of humanity. Hence it comes about that the latter is common to all, but the former cannot be shared by all but is proper to one.[38]

The description of universal properties appears to apply, above all, to essential qualitative properties, since they must apply to all individuals, and must do so entirely (*in singulis tota*), that is, without degrees. However, accidental qualitative properties have degrees: tomatoes can be more or less red according to their degree of ripeness. It is easy to see how this text came to be referred to by medieval realist authors looking for textual authorities that would allow them to hold the existence of metaphysical universality, that is, the capacity for a property to exist at the same time, completely realized, in several distinct spatio-temporal objects. Later on in the text, Boethius clarifies that the absence of degrees allows for the universality of these properties:

> since humanity is both common to all human beings and is in its entirety in the singulars (for all human beings have humanity to the same extent as one human being for if this were not so, the definition of the species

38 *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 136.16–137.3; trans. Smith. Boethius wrote two commentaries on Aristotle's *On Interpretation*, one to help beginners through a literal understanding of the text and a second consisting of a more advanced commentary. This practice of writing double commentaries can be linked to the Neoplatonic concern for pedagogy. The first prepares the students, whereas the second presents more advanced doctrines.

> "human being" would never fit the substance of a particular human being), human being is said to be something universal [. . .].[39]

Both passages rely on the Aristotelian thesis that there is no degree of substance, in the sense that this human being is no more or less a human being than another human being. As a result, Boethius insists that the instantiation of an essential propriety such as human being is always complete. But Boethius demonstrates the highest degree of inventiveness in his discussion of particular properties. For universals, the situation is simple: the name "human being" applies to several individuals due to the "communicable" character of the quality it signifies (humanity). However, for the proper name "Plato," which refers to only one individual, we must find the "incommunicable" particular quality that it signifies. Here is Boethius' solution:

> the former [i.e. the particular quality] cannot be shared by all but is proper to one. For if I may coin a new word I would call the particular quality which cannot be shared with any other substance by an invented name of its own to make clearer exactly what I mean. Let us call the characteristic of Plato that cannot be shared Platonity (*Platonitas*). By inventing a word we can call this quality Platonity in the way in which we call the quality of human being, humanity. And so this Platonity belongs to only one man and not to anyone but only to Plato, whereas humanity belongs to Plato and to the others who are embraced by this word. And so it happens that because Platonity fits only Plato, the listener's mind refers the name Plato to one person and one particular substance, but when he hears "human being" he refers the thought to as many as he knows are embraced by humanity.[40]

This passage, which is a digression from the explication of the Aristotelian lemma, takes a position on the debated issue of the existence of forms of individuals. According to Boethius, these forms exist as individual qualities. It remains for us to find out what they are exactly. Our text gives no explicit answer to this question. We can however reconstruct what his answer might have been. Boethius defended several explanations of individuality; among them, his concept of person (*persona*)—which appears here outside of its usual theological context—enjoyed considerable success. Considering the above description of humanity, it seems difficult to think that *Platonitas* is

39 *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 137.16–25; trans. Smith, slightly modified.

40 *On Aristotle's On Interpretation* 2a, 137.2–16, trans. Smith, slightly modified.

Plato's particular humanity. Humanity is common to all human beings; it is entire in each of them, which is to say identically realized in each of them. We must thus seek an answer elsewhere. On several occasions, Boethius endorses Porphyry's explanation of individuality as a *bundle of properties*. In the *Isagoge*, Porphyry holds that an individual is distinct from other individuals of the same species because it possesses a unique bundle of properties (ἄθροισμα ἰδιοτήτων, *collectio proprietatum* in Boethius' translation).[41] In his second commentary on the *Isagoge*, Boethius adds that "the form that each individual has is not the species which comes from a substantial form, but that which comes from accidents."[42] The principle is that "the beings that are individual and oppose each other by number only differ through accidents."[43] This allows us to reach the following conclusion: "in whatever way Socrates may differ from Plato, he may differ from him by nothing other than accidents [. . .]."[44] That which is unique to Socrates—and that distinguishes him from Plato and all other co-specific individuals—is a set of accidents whose unique and non-repeatable character Boethius follows Porphyry in defending. The same solution is adopted in his treatise *On the Trinity*. There, Boethius insists on the role played by accidents in the constitution of individuals as such: "the variety of accidents produces difference in number; for three men do not differ in genus or in species, but through their accidents" (168.56–58 Moreschini). This interpretation is not without difficulties. It seems difficult to hold that a name like "Plato" signifies a primary substance, a substantial individual, because of a set of accidents. An essential predication such as "Plato is a human being" would no longer be essential because the criterion according to which subject and predicate must belong to the same category would not be fulfilled.

Boethius also promoted logic in a theological context. His theological treatises constitute a lesson in the methodology of rational theology that was to be highly influential. The use of logic in theology was widespread among Greek theologians contemporary with Boethius.[45] In his *Opuscula sacra*—first and foremost *On the Trinity* and *Against Eutyches and Nestorius*—Boethius offered

41 Porphyry, *Isagoge* 7.19–27. For Boethius' translation, see *Aristoteles Latinus* 1.6, 13.21–16.6.

42 Boethius, *On Porphyry's Isagoge* 2a, 200.5–7: "*quae enim uni cuique indiuiduo forma est, ea non ex substantiali quadam forma species, sed ex accidentibus uenit*."

43 Boethius, *On Porphyry's Isagoge* 2a, 241.9–10: "*ea uero quae indiuidua sunt et solo numero discrepant, solis accidentibus distant*."

44 Boethius, *On Porphyry's Isagoge* 2a, 271.18–20: *"quocumque enim Socrates a Platone distiterit—nullo autem alio distare nisi accidentibus potest*."

45 Daley 1984.

a paradigm of rational theology based on logic that medieval thinkers took as a model.

4 The Scholarly Logic of the Encyclopaedists

In the process of its diffusion, Aristotelian logic greatly benefited from the work of three encyclopaedists: Martianus Capella, who dedicated the fourth book of his *Marriage of Philology and Mercury* to dialectic (*dialectica*),[46] Cassiodorus (*ca.* 485–ca. 580), and Isidore of Seville (*ca.* 560/70–4 April 636), who dealt with logic in the second book of his *Etymologies*.

The contribution of Cassiodorus, a Latin politician and writer who founded the monastery of Vivarium, is particularly relevant to our purpose here. His *Institutions* [*Institutiones*] provides an influential summary of logic, inspired by the presentation of syllogistic given by "Apuleius," among other sources. His major work, a commentary on the *Psalms* [*Expositio psalmorum*], defends a particularly remarkable theoretical use of logic.[47] A commentary on the *Psalms* is, according to Cassiodorus, an appropriate place for teaching all the liberals arts, including dialectic, which is to say, logic. Insofar as Aristotle's logic is concerned, the focus is on the use of the theory of the syllogism. Cassiodorus makes a great effort to convince his readers that it is orthodox (*fas est*) to deal with syllogisms in the Scriptures. Commenting on *Psalm* 144, he states the following:

> In my view the astute Aristotle sought to match [the Scriptures] when he assembled topics for secular arguments with remarkable subtlety; in this way, just as all discourse could be enclosed by letters, so by that combination all cultivated learning could be embraced by published judgment. From this source the dialecticians compressed their discussions in abbreviated syllogisms; from it the orators rushed along like rivers; from it the poets surround themselves with beautiful blossoms; from it satirists, historians, comic and tragic poets, were enriched, so that anything set apart from this combination seems virtually to lie beyond the tongue of man. Aristotle bestowed the title *Topics* on this collection. Topics are the bases

46 The title of the fourth book calls for a few words of explanation. In the period until 1100, "logic" and "dialectic" were used interchangeably. "Dialectic" was the more common term. It was used to cover the entirety of logic. On Martianus' logic, see La Vecchia 1999.

47 Here I endorse the conclusion reached in Ferré 2004.

> of arguments, by which the purpose of the disputant to elicit belief is achieved as though by first principles. No religious scruple condemns our reading and discussing this work, for whatever is not found to be hostile to sacred literature is investigated without harm.[48]

Let us take as an example the case of the categorical syllogism. Cassiodorus defines the latter in his commentary on the first *Psalm* in the following terms:

> Here a categorical syllogism can be observed. We must not ignore it, for the primary sense must not appear to have been ineptly disregarded. I shall cite the definition and the parts of the syllogism so that none of these matters can remain uncertain to the uninitiated. A categorical syllogism, then, is one which dialecticians greet with the highest praise. It is the reasoning (*ratio*) by which from certain premises certain other conclusions necessarily (*ex necessitate*) follow because of the premises. It is composed of two propositions and a conclusion.[49]

On eleven separate occasions,[50] Cassiodorus appeals to the syllogism he considers the purest (*purissimus*) and the first (*princeps*). This syllogistic reading of the Biblical text involves interpretative constraints. For example, in the Biblical passage "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye just: and glory, all ye right of heart" (*Psalm* 31 Walsh), Cassiodorus sees the following syllogism (a syllogism of the Barbara form with two universal affirmatives from which we draw a universal affirmative conclusion):

> Every just man rejoices in the Lord;
> Every man rejoicing in the Lord is of upright heart;
> Therefore, every just man is of upright heart.

While this text does not testify to a big step in the history of logic, it is important for intellectual history, as it marks an important stage of the progressive assimilation of logic by Latin Christian thinkers.

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48 Cassiodorus, *Commentary on the Psalms* 144, cols 1028 B–C; trans. Walsh.

49 Cassiodorus, *Commentary on the Psalms* 1, col. 29; trans. Walsh.

50 When commenting on *Psalms* 1, 30, 31, 36, 45, 52, 60, 91, 96, 120 and 150.

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CHAPTER 23

Early Christian Philosophers on Aristotle

George Karamanolis

1 Introduction

It is a historical paradox that Aristotle's philosophy was intensively studied and highly appreciated by later Christian philosophers such as Boethius, Philoponus (*fl.* sixth century), John of Damascus (*fl.* eight century), Thomas Aquinas (*fl.* thirteenth century) and Gennadius Scholarius (fifteenth century), whereas early Christian thinkers (second to fourth century) were as a rule critical or even hostile to Aristotle. Unlike Plato, who is often strongly praised and frequently quoted by early Christians,[1] Aristotle is rarely mentioned or cited, and when this happens, it usually serves a polemical aim: either Aristotle is taken to task for views that are considered to be at odds with the relevant Christian ones—mainly his views on the soul, providence, cosmology, or the contribution of external goods to happiness—or a Christian thinker is criticized for heresy being charged with following Aristotle's doctrines.[2] Early Christians portray Aristotle's philosophy as a source of heresy because of certain allegedly misguided doctrines of his or because of logical distinctions that in their view do not enhance our understanding but rather confuse us.[3] Even

* I have greatly benefited from written comments by Matyas Havrda, Ilaria Ramelli, Jonathan Greig, and especially the editor, Andrea Falcon.

1 Plato is called "friend of truth" (Clement, *Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 5.66.3), "admirable" (θαυμάσιος; (Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* [*Praeparatio Evangelica*] 11.21.7), the one who expresses himself admirably (Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 11.21.7). References to Plato in Clement and Eusebius are second in number only to those of Scripture.

2 This is the case, for instance, with Eunomius (fourth century), a follower of Arius, who was criticized for his debt to Aristotle by Basil, *Against Eunomius* [*Contra Eunomium*] 1.5.43, 1.9.8; Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius* [*Contra Eunomium*] 3.10.50; Nemesius, *On the Nature of Man* [*De natura hominis*] 30.18–32.2, 43.17–44.3. I owe these references to Runia 1989.

3 Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies* [*Adversus Haeresies*] 2.14.5, for instance, accuses the Valentinian Gnostics of being misled in their faith because of their use of Aristotle's λεπτολογία, while Gregory of Nyssa speaks with contempt about Aristotle's τεχνολογία, by which he means his logic (*Against Eunomius*. 2.162.1). Cf. also Epiphanius, *Against the Heresies* [*Panarion*] 76.23.4; 76.26.17; 76.37.16. See Runia 1989: 23–24 and Frede 2005: 151–152.

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when early Christians refer approvingly to certain doctrines of Aristotle or quote from his work, Aristotle is rarely named, let alone praised.

The above outline summarizes the results of several scholarly studies that investigate Aristotle's reception by early Christians.[4] I do not aim to challenge this overall picture. Rather, my aim is to qualify it by looking more closely into some important cases of early Christian reception of Aristotle and to inquire about the reasons for their use of Aristotle. For though generally hostile, the attitude of early Christian thinkers toward Aristotle varies. Let me be more specific. Some of the earliest Christian thinkers we know of such as Tatian, Athenagoras, and Irenaeus deal with Aristotle only in passing and they are invariably critical if not dismissive. Their contemporary Clement of Alexandria, however, pays considerably more attention to Aristotle.[5] Clement speaks of the two kinds of Aristotle's works, esoteric and exoteric (*Miscellanies* [*Stromata*] 5.58.3), he provides one of the earliest references to Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (1.176.2),[6] he often names Aristotle and sometimes approvingly, while he frequently quotes from Aristotle without always acknowledging his source. Clement actually preserves several fragments of Aristotle's lost works.[7] Clement, I will argue, takes more interest in Aristotle because he deems his philosophy partially close to Christian doctrine and because certain Aristotelian doctrines, such as that of the categories, suit his apologetic argument. This is a much more nuanced approach to Aristotle compared with that of his senior contemporaries.

A methodological note is in place here. Unlike some of the studies I referred to above,[8] the evidence I examine in this chapter includes unnamed references to Aristotle, such as Clement's reference to the categories in *Miscellanies* 8. The reason is that the critical attitude of early Christian thinkers toward pagan philosophy as a whole is rhetorical in the sense that

4 Festugière 1932: 222–263; Luzatti 1938; Waszink 1950; Clark 1977; Runia 1989; Frede 2005; Lilla 2014.

5 Runia 1989: 6–7 lists 2 references to Aristotle in Tatian, 3 in Athenagoras, 2 in Irenaeus, but 31 references in Clement, leaving out unnamed references to Aristotle's doctrines in book eight of the *Miscellanies*, which I discuss below, section 2.

6 On the distinction between esoteric and exoteric works see Barnes 1997: 12–16 and Hatzimichali 2013: 12, 26. The first reference to the *Metaphysics* apparently occurs in the summary of Aristotle's philosophy by Nicolaus of Damascus (I refer the reader to chapter 5 of this volume for more on Nicolaus).

7 See Rose 1863: fragments 3–4, 183, 282, 326, 535, 548, 599. I owe these references to Runia 1989: 6.

8 Festugière 1932; Clark 1977; Runia 1989. Waszink 1950 relies mostly but not exclusively on named references.

it makes part of an apologetic argument that distinguishes sharply between paganism and Christianity, whereas they actually set themselves in dialogue with pagan philosophical doctrines they deem fit for their Christian frame of thought.[9] Early Christians often criticize the Stoics, the Epicureans, and the skeptics, but their works abound with arguments informed by Stoic, Epicurean, and even skeptical views, as well as with implicit references to them.[10] Unless we take those references into account, we cannot fully appreciate the impact of pagan philosophers on early Christian thinkers.

Let me add another couple of cases, which will also have a methodological lesson to teach. Origen shows limited interest in Aristotle. We find only a handful of named references to Aristotle in his voluminous work and few unnamed ones. Eusebius of Caesarea, however, a loyal follower of Origen, is more preoccupied with Aristotle. In book 15 of his *Preparation for the Gospel* [*Praeparatatio Evangelica*], Eusebius takes Aristotelian and Stoic philosophy to task for diverging from, and opposing to, Plato's philosophy, which Eusebius defends as the best pagan philosophy, superseded only by Christianity. Eusebius develops an earlier Christian tendency to consider Plato's philosophy as the best form of pagan philosophy that Aristotle abandons. This tendency can be detected already in Clement and Origen, but it becomes much more pronounced in Eusebius, who gives voice to Platonist critics of Aristotle such as Numenius and Atticus. Eusebius represents the highest point of opposition to Aristotle among early Christian thinkers. The question is, however, why Eusebius is much more concerned with Aristotle than Origen is. I will address this question in section 3.

The methodological point I would like to drive home from the examination of Aristotle's reception in Origen and Eusebius is that the distinction between Aristotle, Aristotelian views, and Peripatetic material that David Runia recommends[11] is not helpful, because early Christian authors hardly make such a distinction, which is of course perfectly legitimate from our point of view. Clement claims, for instance, that Aristotle's doctrine of principles only partly follows that of the Scripture, since Aristotle like Plato and the Stoics accept not only God but also matter as principles (*Miscellanies* 5.89.5), and a little later he adds that the Jewish philosopher Aristobulus showed the dependence of Peripatetic philosophy on Hebrew wisdom (*Miscellanies* 5.97.7).[12] Quite clearly,

9 I argue for this point in Karamanolis 2013a: 29–34.

10 See further Karamanolis 2013a: 34–36, 124–125.

11 Runia 1989: 4–5.

12 Aristobulus may have been an Aristotelian philosopher; he knows Ps-Aristotle *On the Cosmos* [*De mundo*]. Cf. Tzvetkova-Glaser 2014: 135–137.

Clement refers to Aristotle's philosophy in both passages. It is also clear that early Christians regard the treatise *On the Cosmos* [*De mundo*] as an authentic work by Aristotle, and when they address the question of Aristotle's view on providence, they often refer to the relevant doctrine outlined in this text.[13] Early Christians largely follow the example of their pagan contemporaries, who equally regard this treatise as an authentic work by Aristotle and also do not distinguish between Peripatetic and Aristotelian views.[14] The excerpts from Atticus' polemical treatise manifest precisely this tendency,[15] which Eusebius follows when he quotes from it in his anti-Aristotelian section (*Preparation for the Gospel* 15.3–13).

Now, given the relatively small interest of early Christians in Aristotle and their overall critical attitude to his philosophy, scholars often wonder whether early Christians had first-hand knowledge of Aristotle or mediated through handbooks and other sources.[16] Some caution is appropriate here. We need to distinguish between degrees of interest in Aristotle and levels of access to his work. The fact that early Christians show limited interest in Aristotle does not necessarily mean that they had only second-hand knowledge of his work. Although secure conclusions on this front are almost impossible to reach, there is evidence that some early Christians like Clement and the Cappadoceans may well have first-hand knowledge of Aristotle.

In the rest of this chapter, I will proceed chronologically with the aim to distinguish different kinds of Aristotle's reception within the generally critical or even hostile attitude of early Christians and to account for their differences. I will be selective rather than comprehensive. I will leave out of my account the critical but superficial remarks of Tatian, Athenagoras, and Irenaeus.[17] Instead,

13 See Ps-Justin, *Exhortation to the Greeks* [*Cohortatio ad Graecos*] 5; Origen, *Against Celsus* 7.3 (see below section 3), and the comments in Festugière 1930: 223 and Runia 1989: 18. The early Christian reception of Ps-Aristotle, *On the Cosmos* [*De mundo*] is discussed in Tzvetkova-Glaser 2014: 140–152.

14 For a brief discussion of the Ps-Aristotle, *On the Cosmos* [*De mundo*], I refer the reader to chapter 5 of this volume. Apuleius made an adapted translation of this work apparently on the assumption that it was genuinely Aristotelian. Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the World* [*De aeternitate mundi*] 174.22–175.7 also treats it as authentic. The first ancient author to express doubts on its authenticity is Proclus, *On Plato's Timaeus* 3.272.20–21.

15 See Karamanolis 2006: 150–157.

16 Runia 1989: 17–19 argues in favor of second-hand knowledge of Aristotle without excluding direct access to Aristotelian treatises; Osborne 1987: 35–67 argues for first-hand knowledge of Aristotle for Hippolytus. See, further, Luzatti 1938, Alfonsi 1948 and 1953, and the discussion below, section 2.

17 For a short discussion of Aristotle's reception by these authors, see Lilla 2014: 228.

I will begin with Clement of Alexandria, who is active in the late second early third century AD, and end with the Cappadoceans and Nemesius of Emesa, who flourish in the fourth century AD, leaving out contemporary as well as later figures such as Epiphanius, Cyril, and Theodoretus, who recycle earlier material. By proceeding chronologically I aim to bring to the fore a certain development in the reception of Aristotle by early Christians. The initial disinterested and hostile attitude toward Aristotle changes into a more informed approach in Clement. Subsequently, this attitude turns into outspoken condemnation by Eusebius. Finally, the Cappadoceans and Nemesius are inspired, or even informed, by Aristotelian views such as those of substance and the soul's relation to body.

2 Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian

Clement is the first Christian author to exhibit a substantial interest in Aristotle's philosophy and the first to set himself in dialogue with it. Clement's attitude toward Aristotle is as ambivalent as his attitude toward pagan philosophy in general is. On the one hand, Clement maintains that pagan philosophy is partially sound and can function as preparation for Christianity.[18] On the other hand, he criticizes it as unsatisfactory and erring.[19] These two claims make actually part of a single view, according to which pagan philosophy draws largely on, or is parallel to, Hebrew philosophy, which means that its value is limited to the extent it agrees with the latter.[20] Unlike other early Christians, though, who are invariably critical of Aristotle, Clement not only criticizes him for contradicting the Christian doctrine—for instance on providence (*Miscellanies* 5.98.3), or on the status of God and thus inspiring heresy (*Protrepticus* 66.4)—but he also refers to Aristotle approvingly.

In a passage where Clement speaks of the division of Moses' philosophy into four parts—historical, legislative, religious, and theological—he also ties these parts to those of pagan philosophy. The first two parts, the historical and the legislative, correspond to ethics, the priestly part corresponds to physics, while

18 Clement calls it προπαιδεία (*Miscellanies* 1.37.1 and 6.41.5–44.1), the path (ὁδός) God has given to pagans to assist their search for the truth (6.110.3–111.1), a rudimentary guide to the perfect science of intelligibles, that is, Christianity (5.68.1). See Lilla 1971: 9–59, Karamanolis 2013a: 41–44.

19 Clement, *Miscellanies* 1.50.1; 1.53.2; 1.88.1. Cf. the discussion in Karamanolis 2013a: 33–34.

20 Clement, *Miscellanies* 1.80.5–6, 1.87.2. On the early Christian claim that pagan philosophy is dependent on the Logos or directly on Hebrew wisdom, see Ridings 1995 and Boys-Stones 2001: 176–202.

the theological or contemplative part is included by Plato in the highest mysteries and is called by Aristotle "metaphysics" (τὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικά; *Miscellanies* 1.176.2). The passage makes part of Clement's argument to the effect that there are parallel developments in Hellenic and Hebrew philosophy, which should be explained by the dissemination of the Logos in both cultures.[21] What is striking for our purposes is that according to Clement both Plato and Aristotle include theology in their philosophy and differ only in terminology,[22] and in this sense both cultivate a kind of philosophy that has its parallel in Hebrew wisdom. To corroborate this conclusion Clement adduces further evidence from the ethical part of philosophy.

In *Miscellanies* 2, Clement discusses man's final end (*telos*), which in the case of Aristotle involves the threefold division of goods, namely goods of the soul or internal goods, goods of the body and external ones (2.128.3–5; 2.34.4; cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.7). Clement does not accept the Aristotelian idea that there are three kinds of goods; rather, he maintains that there is only one good, virtue (4.165.1–166.1 and below). When, however, Clement turns to Plato's conception of final end and especially to the role of marriage in human life, he presents Plato as classifying marriage among the internal goods (2.138.2), as if Plato endorsed the Aristotelian division of goods. But, as I said, Clement rejects Aristotle's view that there are goods other than virtue that contribute to happiness. For Clement, Plato preserves the right ethical ideal of assimilation to God (2.132.1–133.4). This instance shows that for Clement the two philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, operate with similar conceptual schemes and distinctions and that he, at any rate, does not see them in opposition, as Origen and especially Eusebius will do. Clement actually refers with approval to Platonists who write books to suggest that Aristotle and the Stoics took over their most important doctrines from Plato (5.27.3). This point is reminiscent of what Antiochus says on the nature of Aristotelian and Stoic philosophy, as well as of Aristocles' claim that there is a sound tradition of philosophy, to which Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics belong, and from which skeptics and sensualists (e.g. the Epicureans) depart.[23] Clement may also operate with a similar distinction, since he sets out to argue against skepticism

21 This conception of philosophy occurs in Philo of Alexandria, *On Flight* [*De fuga*] 36–7 and later in Origen, *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, prologue 3.1, and Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 11.4–6. See Fürst 2011: 27–28 and Karamanolis 2013a: 46–47.

22 Similarly, Plutarch argues that both Plato and Aristotle deem the contemplative part (τὸ ἐποπτικόν) the most important and the end of philosophy (*On Isis and Osiris* 382 D–E).

23 Antiochus, of course, distinguishes between Aristotle's agreement with Plato and the dependence of Stoics on Plato. Our evidence about Aristocles is shaky. See Karamanolis 2006: 22–23, 36–41, and 51–84.

in *Miscellanies* 8 and, as we will see, he does so by using Aristotelian and Stoic doctrines. Clement, however, does maintain that Plato's philosophy is more valuable than Aristotle's; Plato alone is described as a "friend of truth" (5.66.3) and a "philosopher" (φιλόσοφος), while Aristotle qualifies only as a "natural scientist" (φυσικός; 5.101.4).[24] We encounter this distinction also in Atticus,[25] but Clement clearly does not endorse his hostile view of Aristotle. For in other occasions Clement shows appreciation of Aristotle's philosophy.

Most striking in my view is Clement's reception of Aristotle's doctrine of the categories in *Miscellanies* 8. This book is clearly left unfinished and there is a debate about its present status.[26] Clement speaks about Aristotle's doctrine of categories without mentioning either Aristotle or his specific treatise.[27] Clement claims that the categories are "elements" (στοιχεῖα) under which philosophers classify the infinite number of thoughts and subjects (8.23.3), and he specifies further his view by adding that the categories are "elements of beings in matter" (8.23.6). Such a claim suggests that Clement understands the categories as classes of beings, but interestingly he includes only material beings. Presumably, Clement is informed by the Platonist critique of this Aristotelian doctrine, according to which Aristotle leaves out immaterial beings such as forms or souls, which for Platonists count as beings *par excellence*.[28]

Clement does not explain what he means by "elements of beings in matter," but his view must be the following. All material beings, animate and inanimate, can be subject of predication signifying substance, quality, quantity, relation, and so on. These predicates are elements of beings; they in a way make up what material beings are (e.g. animal, red, one-meter-long, etc.). Clement, however, does not understand the categories only as elements of material beings but also as elements of thoughts (νοήματα). He actually claims

24 This is stock view of Aristotle in antiquity; Chrysippus counts as the dialectician (*Miscellanies* 7.101.4). Cf. Basil, *Against Eunomius* 1.5.43.

25 Atticus calls Aristotle ὁ τῆς φύσεως εὑρετῆς, fr. 3.82, and ὁ τῆς φύσεως γραμματεύς, fr. 7.46–7 Des Places (cf. fr. 5.13–15). In this way, Atticus means to underrate Aristotle as a mere scientist, not a philosopher. See Karamanolis 2006: 175–177. Porphyry makes a similar distinction between the scientist and the philosopher, i.e. the metaphysician (*apud* Simplicius, *On Aristotle's Physics* 9.10–27).

26 See Havrda 2012: 199–200, Karamanolis 2013a: 125–6. Matyas Havrda has prepared a new translation with commentary of *Miscellanies* 8 (forthcoming).

27 For a commentary on this part of Clement's *Miscellanies*, see Frede 2005: 143–145, Karamanolis 2013a: 125–129, and especially Havrda 2012.

28 This is Plotinus' main criticism in *Enneads* 6.1.1, which can be traced back to Nicostratus, as Praechter rightly argued. See Praechter 1922 for documentation and now Griffin 2015: 111–128.

that the categories correspond to universal concepts (καθολικαὶ ἔννοιαι). Earlier on in the book, Clement has argued that such universal concepts are required if we want to give definitions (8.19.2). The question is how exactly concepts and material beings relate in Clement's understanding of the categories. Clement leaves this unspecified. Several hints, however, help us reconstruct the underlying view of his.

Clement begins the section on the categories by distinguishing three aspects of speech (φωνή): (a) names that are symbols of concepts and as a result also symbols of the corresponding things, b) concepts (νοήματα), which are, as he says, likenesses (ὁμοιώματα) and imprints (ἐκτυπώματα) of the corresponding material things, and c) the things themselves (8.23.1). Quite noticeably, this distinction is taken over from Aristotle's *On Interpretation* 1, 16a4–9 and is indicative of Clement's understanding of Aristotle's doctrine of the categories. Clement maintains that there is an analogy between names and elements on the one hand and things/concepts and categories on the other. Just as the infinite names are reduced to the finite, twenty-four, elements of language, the letters, so material things and concepts that are infinite are reduced to certain finite elements, the ten categories. Clement describes a thing or a concept as something subjected to (ὑποτασσόμενον; 8.24.1) a certain class, such as substance, quality, relation, i.e. a category in Aristotle's scheme. Clement's interpretation of the categories covers a middle ground between Plotinus' ontological interpretation and Porphyry's semantic interpretation. For Clement, the categories are the most general kinds classifying things and concepts—neither beings, as Plotinus suggests, nor just words. Clement comes close to Porphyry's interpretation to the extent that for both the categories refer ultimately to material things.[29]

It is not clear, however, why Clement brings in Aristotle's doctrine of the categories. Clearly, his purpose is not merely doxographical. The first chapter of *Miscellanies* 8 suggests that his concern is rather epistemological. There he sets out to show that secure knowledge is possible, and that one can arrive at the truth through scientific demonstration relying on common concepts and on Scripture (8.1.4). He goes on to establish guidelines of demonstration and argue against the Pyrrhonian skeptics, who cast doubt on the attainability of secure knowledge (8.4). The doctrine of the categories makes part of his effort to outline an anti-skeptical epistemology. More directly, the categories are for Clement conceptual tools of universal

29 For Porphyry, the categories are significant words that announce things (*On Aristotle's Categories* 58.23–9). On his interpretation, see briefly Karamanolis 2006: 312–320. Cf. chapter 16 (Porphyry and the Aristotelian Tradition) of this volume.

character by means of which we classify material things and concepts, and by doing so we have a way of assessing whether x (thing or concept) is F (a certain category) and of judging whether this assessment is true or false.

Clement's treatment of Aristotle's doctrine of the categories has its parallel in his reference to Aristotle's four causes (8.18.1). Clement's interest in the four causes is also epistemological; he argues that secure knowledge amounts to knowledge of causes, which he then specifies as the four causes. Also in this case, however, Clement does not mention the Aristotelian provenance of the doctrine. This happens again with regard to ethics, to which I turn next.

Like many other contemporary pagan and Christian thinkers, Clement distinguishes two levels of life, bodily and intellectual, and also two corresponding levels of virtue, one that applies to man as a composite of soul and body and one that applies to man as an intellectual being alone.[30] Such a distinction can be found already in Plutarch and will be developed further later on by Plotinus and Porphyry.[31] Like them, Clement distinguishes between political virtue and intellectual virtue, and he specifies political virtue as a middle state that corresponds to the Aristotelian mean.[32] However, he argues that virtue alone is sufficient for reaching happiness and no external goods can play any role in this regard (*Miscellanies* 4.52.1–3, 5.96.5). As a consequence, he rejects Aristotle's view that goods are of three kinds (4.166.1–3). For, according to Clement, the ideal for the Christian wise man is assimilation to God and this, Clement argues, cannot be achieved through external goods or through reaching the mean between extreme emotions but rather through their extirpation.[33] Clement rejects Aristotle's doctrine of happiness and of virtue as inadequate for the Christian ideal of happiness but he does not dismiss it altogether.

The above discussion shows that Clement takes a more balanced attitude toward Aristotle's philosophy than his contemporaries, as he both criticizes and draws on Aristotle. This is because Clement does regard Aristotle's philosophy as being partly in agreement with Hebrew wisdom, which is why he backs up his apologetic argument with certain Aristotelian doctrines, such as his argument that secure knowledge and demonstration is possible. Some of his references to Aristotle suggest first-hand knowledge of his works, including

30 See Lilla 1971: 60–117.

31 See Dillon 1983, Karamanolis 2006: 118–123.

32 Clement, *The Instructor* [*Paedagogus*] 3.16.4; cf. *Miscellanies* 4.164.3–5.

33 Clement, *Miscellanies* 4.138.1; 4.147.1–2; 7.84.2; cf. 2.131.4–6. See Clark 1977: 15–16, 40–44; Lilla 1971: 102–111; and Osborne 2005: 229–253.

lost ones such as the *Protrepticus* and the dialogue *On Philosophy*.[34] This is far from certain but should not be surprising either. Similar broad knowledge of Aristotle can be found also in Plutarch[35] and in the author of the Ps-Justin's *Exhortation to the Greeks* [*Cohortatio ad Graecos*]; both seem to have access to lost works of Aristotle.[36]

Let me now turn briefly to Tertullian, who is strongly critical of pagan philosophy. Indeed, he explicitly identifies it as a source of heretical views.[37] This hostile attitude, however, does not prevent him from borrowing from pagan philosophers when he seeks support for his arguments. In his *On the Soul*, for instance, which is the first Christian treatise on soul, Tertullian approves of the Stoic doctrine of the soul as *pneuma*, while he criticizes Plato's conception of the soul in the *Phaedo* (*On the Soul* 4–6). Tertullian does know Aristotle's psychological doctrines. We find him approving Aristotle's views concerning the soul, such as the view that intellect is coeval with soul in humans (*On the Soul* 19) or Aristotelian views about dreaming (*On the Soul* 46). In chapter 46, more specifically, Tertullian discusses prophetic dreams and he gives a list of famous interpreters of dreams. In this connection, he mentions Aristotle, apparently his source. We have reasons to believe that the context of this passage is the lost *Eudemus*.[38] Whether Tertullian had direct access to Aristotle's psychological works, such as his *On the Soul* and the lost *Eudemus*, is difficult to say given the evidence available to us.

Different in kind is an instance from Tertullian's work *On the Flesh of Christ* [*De carne Christi*]. In this work Tertullian argues against docetism, the view according to which the human existence and passion of Christ was a mere semblance. Tertullian argues that Christ's resurrection from the dead is true because it is impossible.[39] As has been noticed, this is a clear reminiscence of the statement in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (2.23, 1400a5–9) that the improbable should be true. One wonders what Tertullian's point is here. Does he mean

34 Bignone 1936: 80 draws attention to passages such as *Protrepticus* 1.5.4, where the punishment inflicted by the Etruscan pirates on their prisoners is reminiscent of passages in Iamblichus (*Protrepticus* 47.21–48.9 Pistelli; fr. 36 Rose) that derive from Aristotle's *Protrepticus*. Bignone argues that Clement not only had access to Aristotle's *Protrepticus* but also used it as a model for his own work. A fragment of *On Philosophy* is found in *Miscellanies* 1.61.2 (fr. 4 Rose). See also Lazatti 1938: 9–34 and Alfonsi 1953.

35 See Karamanolis 2006: 89–92.

36 See Alfonsi 1948 and Rose's collection of Aristotle's fragments.

37 See Karamanolis 2013a: 31–33.

38 See Waszink 1947: 145–147 for documentation. Ross accepts it as fragment from the lost *Eudemus* (fr. 20).

39 See Moffatt 1916.

to support his view by a cryptic reference to Aristotle or to parody that view? I incline toward the former option given Tertullian's engagement in a polemical argument in this treatise and given his rhetorical education that may have included the study of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

In *On the Flesh of Christ*, we encounter another unnamed reference to Aristotle. Tertullian argues that the human embryo consists of female menstrual blood and male sperm, a view that goes back to Aristotle and is endorsed by Galen. Tertullian adds that the sperm is responsible also for the heat of the menstrual blood. In this sense, Tertullian argues, the sperm is the principle that conveys the form and shapes the material of menstrual blood, which is exactly the way that Aristotle describes this process.[40] It is not entirely certain, though, whether Tertullian directly used Aristotle or has this knowledge through Galen, whose work he appears to know. A direct usage of Aristotle is not to be ruled out. Clement also quotes Aristotle's views on scientific matters, and this is a rather widespread tendency in late antiquity. Origen and Basil, as we will see, exhibit that tendency too.

3 Origen and Eusebius of Caesarea

As I already said in the introduction, both Origen and Eusebius are critical of Aristotle, yet Origen does not only criticize Aristotle but also draws on him, while Eusebius condemns Aristotle's philosophy as a whole. Let me begin with Origen.

Origen cites from Aristotle's logical and biological works and Aristotelian conceptual distinctions are embedded in his work.[41] One such instance is the citation of the definition of homonymy in Origen's *Homily* 20 on Jeremiah. Origen argues there that God's anger is not like human anger and similarly God's repentance is unlike human repentance; rather, Origen notes, these are cases of pure homonymy.[42] Clearly, Origen has integrated Aristotle's notion of homonymy in his conceptual apparatus and uses it when appropriate. In the same work, Origen appropriates again an Aristotelian conceptual tool, the potentiality-actuality distinction, and modifies it, as he sees fit, without mentioning Aristotle. Talking about the prophet, Jeremiah, who received God's

40 Tertullian, *On the Flesh of Christ* 19.3–4, referring to Aristotle, *On Generation of Animals* 1.20, 729a10–15. See Kitzler 2014.

41 Origen draws on *History of Animals* 9.8, 613b17–614a3 in his *Homily on Jeremiah* 17.1. See Scott 1992. More generally on Origen's knowledge of Aristotle see Crouzel 1962: 31–35.

42 Origen, *Homily on Jeremiah* 20.1.

grace, Origen claims that he was informed by the divine grace not only when he was speaking but also potentially in his spirit (δυνάμει καὶ τῷ πνεύματι).[43] In his *On Principles* (2.11), Origen takes as a starting point in ethics Aristotle's division of three lives, the life of pleasure, the political, and the theoretical life (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1.3) without acknowledging his source. Origen, however, does not hesitate to name Aristotle. In one instance he does this, Origen refers to Ps-Aristotle, *On the Cosmos* [*De mundo*] approvingly, because it allegedly casts doubt on pagan oracles.[44]

In another group of passages, Origen criticizes Aristotle. One such instance concerns the issue of the nature of words, namely whether their meanings are natural or conventional. The discussion goes back to Plato's *Cratylus*, where we find two rival theories, naturalism and conventionalism, advocated by Cratylus and Hermogenes respectively. Aristotle supports the latter option in his *On Interpretation*. Christian thinkers, however, tend to favor naturalism, arguing that names were given by God or by Moses, who follows God's commands. Origen argues for such a view, which we already find in Philo[45] and later in Eusebius.[46] Noticeably, Origen does not only criticize conventionalism but he also associates that theory specifically with Aristotle, despite the fact that this theory is advanced in Plato's *Cratylus*, where Socrates distances himself finally from both naturalism and conventionalism (*Against Celsus* [*C. Cels.*] 5.45). Like earlier Christian critics, Origen also criticizes Aristotle's doctrine of providence (*C. Cels*. 1.21) and his doctrine of the fifth element that Celsus reportedly accepts (*C. Cels*. 4.56).[47] More significant, however, is Origen's disapproval of Aristotle's rejection of Plato's doctrines such as those of the immortality of the soul and of the Forms, which Aristotle called non-sense (τερετίσματα; *Posterior Analytics* 1.22, 83a33). Origen rhetorically asks whether Plato's doctrines are mistaken or Aristotle was ungrateful to his teacher (*C. Cels*. 2.12). Quite clearly Origen opts for the latter option, as other passages show (*C. Cels*. 1.13; 3.13). This is actually the charge against Aristotle that Eusebius mentions (ὅτι ἠχαρίστησε Πλάτωνι; *Preparation for the Gospel* 15.2.13). Eusebius will

43 Origen, *Homily on Jeremiah* 1.12.

44 In his *Against Celsus* 8.3, referring to Ps-Aristotle, *On the Cosmos* 4, 395b; cf. *Against Celsus* 8.45. Ramelli 2013 has argued that Origen knew Alexander's work, which is possible but not certain.

45 Philo of Alexandria, *Cherubim* 56; *On Husbandry* 1–2.

46 Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 11.6.1.

47 Celsus probably belonged to those Platonists who considered Aristotle as a source of Plato's doctrines. See Frede 1994.

elaborate on Aristotle's divergences from Plato by recalling Atticus, who capitalizes on Aristotle's criticism of the Forms as τερετίσματα (fr. 9 Des Places).

Eusebius follows Origen in his predilection for Plato's philosophy and his critical attitude against Aristotle is a consequence of that. Eusebius advances a historical argument about the nature of pagan philosophy, traces of which we find in earlier Christian authors like Clement, and his criticism of Aristotle makes part of that argument. Eusebius was concerned to justify Christianity against pagan criticisms, and he was particularly engaged with the criticism that Christians had abandoned their tradition of Greek culture to espouse the Jewish tradition instead. Already Clement and Origen had addressed this criticism,[48] but Eusebius targets it systematically in his *Preparation for the Gospel*.[49] Eusebius sets out to disarm this criticism by arguing first that Christianity is far superior to pagan culture that includes philosophy and by also arguing that the best part of pagan culture is in agreement with Christianity. In books 1 to 10, Eusebius sets out to show the irrational character of Greek beliefs and customs and the superiority of Jewish ones, while in books 11 to 15 he argues that Plato's philosophy is unlike the rest of Greek culture and philosophy. Eusebius carries out his argument in favor of Plato's superiority in two steps. The first step takes place in books 11 to 13, where Eusebius praises Plato as the best pagan philosopher (book 11, proemium) because he has taken over his important philosophical doctrines from the Hebrews, such as the doctrine of the intelligible realm (11.9–12), of God (11.13–13), or of the Forms (11.24–25). The second step has a polemical character and is realized in books 14 and 15. Eusebius seeks to demonstrate that pagan philosophers contradict each other and also Plato, who, for Eusebius, is the measure of truth in pagan philosophy (although on his own admission Plato also errs: see, e.g., 13.14.16). To the extent that pagan philosophers contradict Plato, Eusebius suggests, they depart from the truth. In book 14 Eusebius targets the Presocratics, Cyrenaics, Epicureans, and Pyrrhoneans, whereas in book 15 he tackles Aristotle and the Stoics. In this book, Eusebius proceeds to criticize the most important philosophical doctrines of Aristotle by quoting Atticus, since his agenda fits with that of Eusebius: Atticus accuses Aristotle of departing from truth as a result of diverging from Plato.

The question, however, is why Eusebius is openly polemical against Aristotle. One possible answer has to do with his eagerness to construct a historical argument to the effect that only Plato among pagans represents the sound philosophy, because, as Eusebius argues, only Plato had drawn on Hebrew wisdom

48 Clement, *Miscellanies* 2.28–29, *Protrepticus* 10.89; Origen, *Against Celsus* 1.9, 3.39.

49 See Frede 1999, 241–243.

and since one kind of pagan philosophy was raised to the right measure, all diverging philosophical schools were bound to be failures. This answer will not do for two reasons: first, because on a number of issues Aristotle agrees with Plato, as was pointed out by Clement and contemporary Platonists; second, because it is unclear why Eusebius' approval of Plato should bring him to criticize Aristotle in such strong terms. Rather, the answer to this question, I suggest, has to do with Eusebius' theological views and more specifically with his views on the status of God as the first cause and its relation to the world of which it is the cause. It also has to do with Eusebius' pagan opponents, namely Porphyry. Let me start with Eusebius' theology.

Eusebius takes a view on the nature of God that is closer to a certain interpretation of Plato's theology than to Aristotle's theological doctrine.[50] Like many other Christians including Origen, Eusebius wanted to distance God-the-Father as much as possible from the sensible realm of matter and vice and postulate God-the-Father as the cause of everything. The question is how that is possible, since for Christians as for Platonists, God is the creator of the universe. There was a tendency in early Christian philosophy to distinguish between God-the-Father and God-the-Son by assigning the role of the creator to the latter.[51] But if this distinction is too strong, then God-the-Father is not the ultimate cause of the creation, and if it is too weak, he would not be sufficiently distanced from the sensible world. Eusebius follows Origen in distinguishing between God-the-Father and God-the-Son, whom he identifies with Logos (*Preparation for the Gospel* 11.21.6). For both authors, the former is the cause of all being, the creator of intelligible reasons (*logoi*) and only secondarily the creator of the sensible world, namely to the extent that he operates through God-the-Father, while the Logos is strictly speaking responsible for the creation. It is because Eusebius takes this view about God that he quotes Numenius with approval, who distinguishes between first and second god in similar terms, that is, between the first god who is the source of being and the second god who is the source of creation.[52] The latter is the creator of the *Timaeus*, while the former is identical with the Form of the Good of the *Republic* 6 (509 B). Origen and Eusebius agree further with Numenius that the first god, or, in Christian terms, God-the-Father, brings about eternally

50 I argue for this in detail in Karamanolis 2014.

51 For a summary of this debate, and of Origen's views in particular, see Karamanolis 2013a: 95–96, 107–116.

52 This is the distinction between δημιουργὸς τῆς οὐσίας and δημιουργὸς τῆς γενέσεως. Cf. *Preparation for the Gospel* 11.22.3; Numenius fr. 16 Des Places). On Numenius see Karamanolis 2013b.

the second god, the creator, the Christian Logos, who maintains the world-order according to the Father's wish. This distinction between two Gods with distinct causal roles and ontological status is foreign to Aristotle; his God is an intellect that accounts for the order in the world but is neither the cause of being nor a creator of the world.

This for Eusebius is a crucial point of disagreement with Aristotle. The question of world-creation is quite important in this regard. Eusebius openly claims that the world is created (γενητός) for both Plato and Moses (*Preparation for the Gospel* 11.29), and this is clearly a very important point of agreement between the two and an important reason for approving Plato. The acceptance of this interpretation of Plato is also another reason why Eusebius finds Aristotle in opposition to Plato, since on Aristotle's view the world has never come into being but has always existed. It is this interpretation of Plato that Atticus defended, criticizing specifically the partisans of the view that the world is uncreated.[53] The latter included Aristotle as well as the Platonists who opted for a non-literal interpretation of the creation story in the *Timaeus*.[54]

We see, then, that Eusebius has specific *philosophical* reasons for rejecting Aristotle in favor of Plato, which also account for his choice of Platonist critics like Numenius and Atticus. It is no accident that these Platonists argued that there is a sound tradition of philosophy in which they included Plato but not Aristotle, as Eusebius does in his *Preparation for the Gospel*. A major representative of the opposite view was Porphyry, who clearly was Eusebius' main pagan adversary because of his anti-Christian polemic. Eusebius' criticism of Aristotle's philosophy as essentially at odds with that of Plato may well target Porphyry for his thesis in favor of the essential agreement between Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies.[55] For Eusebius the critique of Aristotle is instrumental for realizing his argument to the effect that pagan philosophy is for the most part in error. But this argument hits Porphyry too, and this is a gain for Eusebius.

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53 Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* 15.6.3: οἷς ἀρέσκει καὶ κατὰ Πλάτωνα τὸν κόσμον ἀγένητον εἶναι. (cf.15.6.6; Atticus fr. 4.3 Des Places). The non-literal interpretation goes back apparently to Xenocrates (fourth century BC) and was popular in the second and third centuries AD among Platonists such as Taurus and Porphyry.

54 Runia 1989: 22 is wrong to claim that "the Fathers pay surprisingly little attention to his [Aristotle's] doctrine of the eternity and non-createdness of the cosmos." The case of Basil also speaks against this view, as we will see in the next section.

55 I argue this at length in Karamanolis 2014: 180–187.

4 Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Nemesius of Emesa

If we now turn to Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa, we detect only few explicit references to Aristotle. Like Clement and Tertullian, Basil uses Aristotle's scientific works such as the *History of Animals* and the *Meteorology* in his *Homilies in Hexaemeron* [*Hex*.].[56] In the same work, Basil refers implicitly to Aristotle when he takes to task the view that the world is without beginning on the grounds that the universe moves in circles.[57] By contrast, both Basil and Gregory of Nyssa name Aristotle in their works *Against Eunomius* while accusing Eunomius of being inspired by Aristotle's philosophy for his heretical doctrines. Basil and Gregory present Aristotle as the philosopher skilled in technical and dialectical matters, which Eunomius employs.[58] But this reference serves only the polemical aim of accusing Eunomius of sympathizing with pagan philosophy and does not tell us anything about Gregory's appreciation of Aristotle's philosophy. This can only emerge from a close study of Basil's and Gregory's works.

Both Basil and Gregory are considerably indebted to Aristotle for the formation of their views on substance and on human soul. The problem, however, is that Aristotle is not the only source of their philosophical inspiration; Plato and the Stoics also play a crucial role in the formation of their thoughts. Unfortunately, we are not always in position to distinguish clearly Aristotle's contribution to their views from that of other pagan philosophers. One such a case is the view on the topic of substance that both Basil and Gregory take. As is well known, they distinguish between *ousia* (οὐσία) and *hypostasis* (ὑπόστασις),[59] and the way they make this distinction suggests that the *hypostasis* captures Aristotle's first substance in the *Categories*, namely individuals, while *ousia* captures Aristotle's second substance, namely universals such as genera and species (Basil, *Hex*. 24.4). This, however, is not the end of the story. They qualify *ousia* and *hypostasis* further, and the source of that qualification can be traced back to Stoicism. They maintain that *hypostaseis* have distinctive properties (ἰδιώματα) which are complementary of *ousia* (συμπληρωτικὰ τῆς οὐσίας) and account for the individual character of a thing, say Peter as opposed to man. But as has been pointed out, the notion of distinctive properties is

56 *Hex*. 3.5, 65 B (Aristotle, *Meteorology* 2.2, 354b36–355a34); *Hex*. 3.6, 68 A (Aristotle, *Meteorology* 1.13, 350b10); *Hex*. 7.3, 152 A (Aristotle, *History of Animals* 8.2); *Hex*. 8.2, 169 A–B (Aristotle, *History of Animals* 1.1, 487b). See Müllenhof 1867.

57 *Hex*. 1.3, 9A, referring probably to Aristotle, *Physics* 8.8.

58 Basil, *Against Eunomius* 1.5.43, 1.9.8; Gregory, *Against Eunomius* 3.10.50.

59 See e.g. Basil, *Epistle* 236.6, *Hex*. 24.4; Gregory of Nyssa, *Epistle* 38.2.

Stoic, as is also that of *ousia* as a qualityless substrate (ἄποιον ὑποκείμενον) that admits these properties.[60]

A similar sophisticated appreciation of Aristotle's doctrine of the soul can be found in Gregory's works *On Soul and Resurrection* [*De anima*] and *On the Creation of Man* [*De opificio hominis*]. Gregory explicitly refers to Aristotle as the philosopher who studies the natural phenomena in detail (*De anima* 52 A), and he also mentions Aristotle's treatise *On the Soul*, which presents soul as mortal, a view that Gregory rejects of course. This, however, does not mean that Gregory ignores Aristotle. There are several aspects of Gregory's theory of the soul, which seem to be inspired by Aristotle's doctrine of the soul.

To begin with, Gregory argues that soul and body come about together; the soul does not pre-exist but rather exists already in the sperm (*De opificio hominis* 253 B–D). Gregory actually argues that there is no way of separating soul and body, as there is no way of separating form and matter (253 C), a view reminiscent of Aristotle's claim in *On the Soul* 2.1, according to which soul and body relate to each other as form of wax relates to matter. Gregory underlines this relation when he argues that the departure of the soul from the body results in the formlessness of the latter (ἀμορφία), as is the case when an object loses its form (161 D). Gregory proceeds to suggest that the soul gradually informs the body, in the same way that the sculptor carves form on matter gradually until that form reaches perfection (253 B–C). What guides this perfection is the form itself, which has formed the body partly and is end-oriented. For Gregory the soul is not only a form, as is for Aristotle, but also a form that brings about perfection; as for Aristotle so for Gregory the soul strives strictly to make the body a human body, a process that starts in embryo. Gregory specifies that the soul is an intellect or of intellectual nature (176 B–D). It is the intellect, he says, that shapes the human body so that it can become the body of a rational being and can be used as the instrument of reason (148 C). The arrangement of the human body, Gregory argues, is due to the shaping effect of reason, our soul-intellect (136 B, 144 A–C). This is why our senses perceive in a rational way, because, Gregory suggests, it is the soul-intellect that actually perceives through them (*De anima* 32 A).[61] But that would be impossible unless the soul-intellect has shaped our body in accordance with reason. The soul-intellect is responsible for the unity of perception. But that unity suggests to Gregory that the intellect is not a mere faculty of the soul but the soul, the form of the body. Gregory does not follow slavishly Aristotle's doctrine of the soul but his debt is clear. The soul for Gregory is an immaterial form that accounts for the actu-

60 Robertson 1998, Karamanolis 2013a: 98–100, 113–115.

61 Cf. Plato, *Theaetetus* 184 C–185 B.

alization of the human body as such, for its unity and for its distinct rational character that develops to perfection during human life.

Aristotle's doctrine of the soul is appreciated also by Nemesius (*fl.* late fourth century). In *On Nature of Man* [*De natura hominis*], Nemesius discusses Aristotle's definition of the soul as actuality of the body (26.10–28.12) and Aristotle's view that the soul moves only accidentally (28.13–29.18) and he criticizes both. His criticism of the former is twofold: first, that Aristotle mistakes the soul with the power that enlivens the body while neglecting the most important part of the soul, the rational, which Nemesius, following the Platonist tradition, takes as independent of the body (27.11–14); second, Nemesius argues, the body cannot receive the soul unless it is already a body; for if it is not body, how can it have the potentiality to possess life (27.15–28.3)? Regarding Aristotle's view about the soul moving only accidentally, Nemesius notes that such a view cannot explain the movements of the living body (28.14–29.8).[62] Nemesius eventually rejects the Aristotelian conception of the soul in favor of a Platonist one, but he does so after considering the Aristotelian doctrine. He actually endorses Aristotle's view that the soul has faculties, as Plutarch and Severus did (54.23–55.3; cf. 44.1–3). He also does not hesitate to refer the reader approvingly to Aristotle's biological works regarding the biological function of animals.[63] This balanced attitude toward Aristotle may well reflect one of Nemesius' sources, Porphyry.

5 Conclusion

I have argued that early Christian thinkers are as a rule critical or even hostile to Aristotle, but this attitude both varies and changes through the centuries. The first landmark in this development is Clement, who uses Aristotle's doctrines in support of his apologetic arguments and exhibits knowledge even of lost works of Aristotle. Origen is much more guided by Plato and considers Aristotle as Plato's critic, a view that Eusebius vigorously advocates. The Cappadoceans set themselves more seriously in dialogue with Aristotle's philosophy and some of their views are informed by Aristotle.

62 See Sharples and van der Eijk 2008: 64–67.

63 E.g. *On the Nature of Man* 45.7 (Aristotle, *On Generation of Animals* 1.19, 726b), 46.20–22, 49.23 (Aristotle, *On Generation and Corruption* 2.3, 331a).

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